



오크지만 찬양해

이정민
판타지 장편소설

1

몬스터

Praise the Orc!

– 오크지만 찬양해! –

- Volume 6 -

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CHAPTER 126

WHITE KNIGHT (1)

Ian disconnected.

It felt like he had been away on a long trip. It was very strange for him to transition from Crockta, the oversized orc warrior, back into Ian's slim body. He checked his watch and saw that it was still was early in the morning.

The adventures he had in Elder Lord went through his head.

A dream. No, it was all true.

Ian fell onto his bed with a smile. He was tired. He risked his life and wielded his greatsword on the bloody battlefield. He had ended the connection and came from such a harsh place to a tranquil house.

He hugged a blanket and closed his eyes as his body sank onto the bed. As he closed his eyes, the landscape of the desolate north stretched out again in the darkness.

The texture of the hair on Calmahart's head as Crockta's greatsword pierced his neck was clear. The orc warriors filling the plains. They fell to their knees. They acknowledged him as the great chieftain.

His greatsword.

It was everything. He saved the city and the north while holding Ogre Slayer that fit in his grasp. According to his will, the orcs abandoned their weapons, resulting in the end of the war.

The world of Elder Lord was so clear that all types of things were mixed together, making it difficult to distinguish reality. Compared to the old battlefields where good and evil couldn't be discerned, the struggles of Elder Lord were definitely worth fighting for.

His consciousness fell as he lay on the bed. He lost consciousness as he went into a deep sleep.

In the dream, he wasn't Ian but the orc Crockta. In it, he returned to Orcrox and was drinking with the orc warriors. The warrior's song was exciting.



He opened his eyes. A sound was heard outside. It was the sound of the television. Ian rubbed his eyes as he exited and saw Yiyu watching television on the couch.

She glanced at Ian and said, "It seems like it's been a long time since I've last seen Oppa."

"I see you everyday."

"You've been busy playing the game recently."

"That... I was."

Ian nodded.

It was still morning. She only sent him a disgruntled expression and asked, "Do you want something to eat?"

"Yes."

"What?"

"I'll take care of it."

It might be because Yiyu was younger, but it was clear what her intentions were. Ian smiled and headed into the kitchen. When he returned to Korea, he had thought about setting up a restaurant before a cafe. He didn't cook well, but serving good food to others seemed like a good life.

The happiest time after finishing his assignments was washing up and then sharing delicious food with his companions, so he hoped that such a scene would become his routine. Of course, in the end, he chose to run the more casual and tranquil café. However, he regretted not going to a cooking school in those days.

"Huhu, I will take care of this..."

It was the sound of a confident chef. A chef's pride! A chef couldn't retreat here. Ian imagined the best food he could cook. Soon after, Ian received the fruits of his pride.

"Hello."

"Yes. Here it is."

"This is the cash. Yes. Thank you. Work hard now."

"Yes. Please enjoy."

The chicken arrived. Of course, Yiyu felt admiration.

"Eating fried chicken in the morning?"

"Just eat."

The two of them ate the chicken side-by-side in the morning. Right now, it was summer. The morning sun shone through the window. Yiyu put a chicken leg straight into her mouth and suddenly said, "Oppa."

"Yes."

"I failed my test."

"Really?"

Ian glanced over at the television. He couldn't hear much because the sound was lowered, but it was a story about Elder Lord. This world was currently in the era of Elder Lord. Ian bit a piece of chicken and looked at Yiyu again.

"Aren't you mad?"

"Why should I be mad?"

"You should be angry that your little sister ruined her grades, despite paying for the expensive tuition!" She exclaimed while chewing on the lean meat.

Ian agreed. "I understand. Come to think of it, I am angry. For the time being, no more pocket money..."

“Wait a minute.” Yiyu hurriedly shook her head as she said, “No, I don’t think there is a need for Oppa to be angry. Yes. Don’t think about my grades.”

“I’m going to get angry.”

“Don’t be angry!”

“The one who farted is angry...”

“I didn’t fart.”

Ian smiled at Yiyu. Within a short period of time, Yiyu held her bloated belly and leaned back against the couch. “What happens if I can’t get a job due to my grades?”

“Work in the café.”

“I don’t want to.”

“Why?”

“You already have Yeori unni.”

“I thought you liked Yeori.”

“Yes, but she is the real manager. It might be uncomfortable if the Boss’ sister gets in through connections. Right now, there are enough employees.”

“Then I’ll give you a new café.”

“Wow.” Yiyu narrowed her eyes. “Do you have a lot of money?”

Ian was watching the television while listening to her.

It was about the rankings in Elder Lord. Recently, the rankings in Elder Lord had changed rapidly. New strong players appeared and existing rankers fell. At the heart of the rankings were three users.

The master of the Heaven and Earth, Korea’s highest ranking clan, ‘Rommel’, Choi Hansung. The one who used his experience in past online classic games to break through dungeons, ‘Pathfinder’ Gunnar.

And someone else.

“Is Oppa listening to me?”

“C-Cough...”

“Uh, are you okay? Do you want some coke?”

A mysterious user who didn't reveal any information. For convenience, users gave him the nickname of Mystery. The only thing public was his level and achievement points.

In Elder Lord, ranks were determined by achievement points. Choi Hansung was ranked No.1 while Gunnar was No.2. Choi Hansung accomplished untouchable achievements through war while Gunnar was recognized as the best adventurer on the continent by NPCs for his work in dungeons.

However, the level was different. The No.3 Mystery was level 117. It was the highest level so far. It was an overwhelming number, considering that Choi Hansung was level 95 while Gunnar was level 92.

Achievement points were combined with other things to calculate the level, and this was the highest level in Elder Lord. Fearsome skill levels! The class was unknown, but if it was a combat class, this person would be the strongest when it came to fighting.

And that person called Mystery. It was Ian. After killing Calmahart and placating the north, he had reached 117 in level. His achievement points were the same.

Ian looked away from the television towards Yiyu. She was tilting her head with a dark expression.

“Anyway, because of the test...”

“It will be okay.” Ian shook his head and said. “Just learn good management. If you can't get a job then I'll give you a store, so just learn how to run it well.”

The last ranker's settlement money was a huge number. In addition, the ranker's settlement increased exponentially the closer to the top a user was. The figure this time would probably be more than he could imagine. It felt like he had gone back to the days when he risked his life on the battlefield to earn some money.

“Hrmm...” Yiyu narrowed her eyes. “I think you have some money, Oppa.”

“Yes, the situation is like this, so please don’t worry.”

“Uhh... Oppa, I must’ve done something good in my past life.” She smiled and said, “I can live a really cheeky life because I have Oppa.”

It was a bright face that resembled his mother’s. No, his father.

In his memory, he recalled Yiyu’s childhood face as she kept on crying. She couldn’t accept their parents’ death so she kept crying at the funeral home. She then cried when she was separated from Ian and left with their relatives.

His father’s words were still clear in his mind,

‘Mother and Father are busy, so you have to protect your little sister.’

‘A brother and sister should have a closer relationship with each other than with their parents. You have to depend on each other until you die. It is the deepest family connection. So...’

‘You must protect Yiyu.’

‘I believe in you.’

Yes, it was his mission.

Ian smiled as he looked at Yiyu.

“So be good to me.”

“Am I not being good to you right now?”

“Very.”



“Umm...”

Ji Hayeon frowned.

As a favor to Ian, she was investigating Elder Lord. But it was an unknown territory that she couldn't reach. Everything was confidential. Ji Eunuchul, her father, and several key figures in Elder Saga Corporation were able to view the information.

However, there was something she could see. The man called Yoo Jaehan. The father of Elder Lord. He made everything. The core system called Albino was his work. But he disappeared at some point. He might've died, or maybe he was a madman, floating around the world somewhere. Since the launch of Elder Lord, no one had seen him.

There was also a researcher named Park Jujin, but his location and the research institute that contained Albino was unknown.

"At this point, I am curious as well."

The secretary who always followed her shrugged and said, "There must be a reason for the chairman not letting you know. What will you do now?"

"I'm curious."

"It is just a game."

"But this game is sweeping the world."

The whole world was linked to Elder Lord. The developed and not so developed countries, everybody who could afford the access capsules was within Elder Lord. What if there was a conspiracy involving it? The world was under its influence.

"Here, this is the last one." The secretary handed Ji Hayeon some documents. It wasn't that thick. However, the title and author were strange. It was a thesis.

"What is this?"

"I'm not sure. It doesn't belong to Yoo Jaehan but the man who was with him. It was one of the things Yoo Jaehan left behind in his office, so it seemed useless."

She roughly scanned it. There were all types of formulas and terms that she couldn't understand, so she closed it immediately. Then she looked at the secretary for an explanation, who shrugged and said, "The assistant who followed Yoo Jaehan around. A disciple? Well, he was the one who wrote this."

“What is it?”

“I don’t know. The title and author are here.”

She saw it. It was the first time she properly saw the author’s name.

“A foreigner?”

“Yes.”

Gordon Calamity. It wasn’t a famous name.

“Where is this person right now?”

“Missing.”

“Huh?”

“This man disappeared before Yoo Jaehan. Nobody knows where that person is.”

“He is odd just like Yoo Jaehan.” Ji Hayeon shrugged. “Anyway, please continue to investigate. This is a top priority.”

“I understand.”

“In particular, contact me if you find Yoo Jaehan. There seems to be something about Elder Lord.”

“Yes.”

The secretary bowed and left the room.

Ji Hayeon once again looked at the papers. It was still unknown. She was unable to understand her interest in this. Who would write such a thesis? She couldn’t understand the contents, but she could see that he really wanted to send a message to people. It was a subject of science that nobody cared about these days.

So why did he follow someone like Yoo Jaehan?

“Can entropy be reversed? I don’t know.”



Baek Hanho frowned. He had been preparing carefully. He looked forward to the upcoming war.

–The orc Crockta, who once surprised the users, is back!

–Yes. Everyone was surprised by the sudden system messages. Orc Warrior Crockta is said to have ended the war by defeating the mad chieftain, Calmahart. It is almost certainly the righteous orc, Crockta. The last place where Crockta was heading was the north.

–The members of Crockta’s fan club ‘He’s an Orc, yet still Praiseworthy’ are increasing again. Not only that, the members of ‘Rehabilitation Brothers’, who were inspired by Crockta, are celebrating this news.

–Will he return to the continent?

–Let’s see. I don’t know. NPCs’ minds are known only to NPCs. However, it is my personal hope that the orc once again spreads the message of hope to people in Elder Lord.

–Ah, is Yoojung a member of He’s an Orc, yet still Praiseworthy?

–Hahaha. Not yet, but I want to join!

However, that guy called Crockta prevented it. Before Baek Hanho could even start!

“Euh...”

Baek Hanho sat in the manager’s office and roughly turned off the television before leaving his office. The gym staff members bowed to him. He raised his head and stood in front of a sandbag. The employees were troubled by Baek Hanho’s anger. Baek Hanho punched the sandbag, which flew into the air.

“That Crockta...!”

He wanted to beat that Calmahart with his power, but someone had already done it. Moreover, he didn’t like the title of Righteous Orc. Because...

“I have to meet him in person once!”

The title of 'justice' belonged to him in Elder Lord, Baek Hanho, also known as, 'White Knight Andre'!

CHAPTER 127

WHITE KNIGHT (2)

Baek Hanho stopped punching the sandbag and pointed out the attitude of the members as he circled the gym. Due to his sensitive temper today, if he corrected a posture and they didn't do it well, he would demonstrate it himself.

“.....”

A female member watched with fear as Baek Hanho approached her.

'Baek Hanho's gym was a gathering place for men who had strength in the neighborhood and wanted to do some fighting. All of them were rugged and rough looking men. Such men had fallen at Baek Hanho's gentle hand.

She was just an ordinary person who had a house nearby and wanted to become healthy. She laughed awkwardly when Baek Hanho stood in front of her.

“Hahaha... Manager-nim.”

“Have you practiced what I taught you before? Let me see it once. One two!”

“Uh...”

She closed her eyes. Then she extended her fist awkwardly.

Hwiik. Hwiik.

“One two, one two!”

“Aih!”

“Double this time!”

“Uhh.”

“Two one two one!”

Hwik hwik. Hwik! Hwik hwik hwik.

She flailed around. The previous men had fallen down right away. But for some reason, Baek Hanho was nodding.

“Good.”

“.....?”

“You have been here for three months?”

“Four months...”

“Hahaha. That is very good. Exercising is good.”

“.....”

She couldn't help nodding dumbly because she had just witnessed a one-month member collapse from a low kick 1cm under the waist.

“But keep this in mind. Our physical body is a weapon. Martial arts is murder.”

“Huh?”

“If possible, especially if you are a woman, try to resolve the situation without fighting.” Baek Hanho gazed at a distant place and said. “It is a knight's mission to protect ladies but this world...”

She forced a smile as Baek Hanho started talking nonsense.

“Knights have disappeared in modern times...”

Someone should tell him. But he was already in his own world. There was no one in this gym who could stop him.

At that moment. “What are you doing?”

“.....”

It was Ian. Ian stood behind Baek Hanho. He looked at Baek Hanho with questioning

eyes.

“Hum hum, you came.”

“Why are you speaking strange words all of a sudden?”

“What type of strange things was I saying?”

“Play games a bit more moderately.”

“Who are you to say...”

Ian and Baek Hanho started to walk towards the manager’s office while talking.

The female member stared blankly after them. After being left alone, the female member punched the sandbag and thought about Baek Hanho’s words. Their bodies were a weapon. Martial arts was murder. And ‘ladies.’

She laughed.

“How old-fashioned.”

Then she quietly stared into the air. Her hands were making strange gestures.

“Magic is to save people.”

In Elder Lord, she was a magician.



“What have you been doing? Yeori is worried about you.”

Ian’s eyes narrowed. “Yeori?”

“Yes, Yeori.”

“When did you talk to Yeori?”

“A little while ago.” As Ian stared at him, Baek Hanho shrugged and shook his head. “Oh, she showed interest because I am the one who taught you, but that is it. So don’t

glare at me like that.”

“It is hard to believe when looking at you. Aren’t you playing as a knight too much in the game?”

“This kid, insulting your teacher. In the old days, this would be punished.”

Ian laughed. “What... if you are capable...”

Ian and Baek Hanho’s eyes clashed again. Sparks were flying from both pairs of eyes. It felt like they would head back to the ring again, but the two of them shook their heads and leaned back.

“I guess I’m too tired...”

“I did say...”

Ian wanted to take a break for a while after fighting Calmahart. While the capsule allowed him to control his character without moving a muscle, he was still mentally exhausted. Baek Hanho was also tired from his activities in Elder Lord so he didn’t want to bother with Ian.

They just leaned back in their chairs. Baek Hanho sighed and asked.

“What species are you?”

“It’s a secret.”

“Class?”

“Secret.”

“This guy.”

“What about Teacher? Are you a knight?”

“Will you tell me if I tell you?”

“No.”

“Phew, I brought up my disciple wrongly.”

“It is because of Teacher that your disciple grew up like this.”

“Well... your words aren’t wrong.” Baek Hanho laughed as he leaned back in his chair.
“Ian.”

“Yes.”

“These days, this guy has been running wild.”

Baek Hanho raised a hand and a video appeared on the television screen that occupied a wall of the manager’s office. Ian flinched. It was Crockta.

“.....”

To other people, Crockta looked really hideous. A heinous face, a fearsome body that was covered in tattoos, a hand that held the ignorantly large greatsword, regardless of fatigue. Just looking at his appearance, he seemed like a villain.

“I don’t like him.”

“W-Why?”

“I was trying to catch the enemy called Calmahart, but this guy finished it before I could even start.”

Baek Hanho changed the screen. This time, it was the best video site in the world, Youvids. The main screen of Youvids was filled with Crockta. After the news of Calmahart’s defeat had spread, the value of Righteous Orc Crockta rose again, meaning videos of Laney and other users who filmed him were constantly rising.

The number of views had already reached the peak. Video’s of Choi Hansung’s war had been pushed to the next level by Crockta.

“I will catch this guy!” Baek Hanho cried out.

Ian stilled.

“What, are you scared?”

“...No.”

Baek Hanho nodded. “I know. He is a frightening guy. No matter how strong he is, he is still a monster in the game! He has ridiculous strength and physical abilities.”

Crockta’s battle footage.

Chesswood. Ian’s mind sank into the memories of that time. Innocent people had died. They weren’t NPCs. Those who actually existed were killed by users connected to Elder Lord. Due to the ‘cognitive modification’ power of the god, others couldn’t even understand this possibility.

“Look. That beast-like movement.” It was a scene where Crockta pierced through spears and swords, killing them all. He jumped into the middle of enemy territory. The users started to run away. Crockta chased and stabbed his sword in their backs.

“The amazing thing is the speed of development.”

This time, it was a video of the past. Three players were confronting an orc. It was the user hunters he bumped into at Anail. They wanted to kill Crockta but he took the lives of the enemies in a flash.

“The boldness and determination are amazing. This person knows how to fight properly.”

It was a compliment from Baek Hanho but Ian felt strangely anxious.

Ian asked. “So?”

“I have to catch this guy.”

“...Why?”

“I don’t like him.”

Ian looked at Baek Hanho’s expression. He was sincere. That expression, he was going to swing his sword as soon as Crockta returned to the continent.

Ian calmly said. “Hold on. Crockta is strong, righteous and popular. He even has a fan club.”

“Fan club? I am one too.”

“Huh?”

“Huhuhu, do you want to know?”

“Don’t lie.”

“This guy... really. Of course, I won’t tell you. You can just wonder.”

“.....”

Baek Hanho changed the screen again. As he did so, he unwittingly opened the menu of his favorite Youvids videos.

“.....!”

Baek Hanho hurriedly turned it off and looked to see if Ian had seen his favorites menu. Fortunately, Ian was checking his phone.

“What are you looking at?”

“Nothing.”

Baek Hanho coughed.

“I have to go now. I need to show my face at the cafe.”

“Yes. Don’t just let other people do the work. Unearned income makes people sick.”

In fact, the gym was mostly run under Baek Hanho’s supervision. Ian shook his head.

“Take care.”

“You too.”

Ian left Baek Hanho’s gym. Then he headed towards Cafe Reason.



He didn't come empty-handed. He stopped by the bakery and bought a few things.

After arriving at Cafe Reason, Han Yeori grumbled and gave some to Yoo Sooyeon, who was arranging a few minor things on the counter. There were customers.

Ian opened his phone while sipping a latte that he made. He entered a search term.

'White Knight Andre.'

Ian had briefly seen Baek Hanho's favorites list. Baek Hanho's favorites were filled with videos of a user called White Knight Andre. Immediately after confirming it, he pretended to be doing something else.

If he knew his enemy, he could win. Baek Hanho would surely come to him. It would be in the world of Elder Lord.

The first kill! He would do it.

The name 'White Knight Andre' was well-known.

"Uh, Boss-nim knows about Andre?" Han Yeori approached and sat down next to him.

"You know him?"

"I know. He is really cool."

"...Cool?"

"Yes."

Ian looked at the video playing with questionable eyes and Han Yeori said. "I don't play the game but I've seen videos of this person."

Then Ian almost spat out his coffee at the close-up appearance of the character.

Dazzling blonde hair. Clear blue eyes. A straight nose, white skin with no wrinkles and soft pink lips. Silver plated armor covered the entire body. It was the appearance of a medieval young knight. How much work could be done to customize his appearance

to such an extent?

Furthermore, he was riding on a beautiful white horse with a flowing mane.

“Isn’t he cool?”

“Um...” Ian nodded.

In the video, Baek Hanho, no White Knight Andre was speaking.

“Diabolical ones who wield a sword against a lady.”

He got down from his horse. He rubbed the forehead of the white horse, as if telling it to wait a moment, before raising his sword towards the enemies in front of him. It was a well-worn longsword.

“I am Knight Andre, and I will let you know what justice is.”

Then he rushed towards the enemies in front of him. The opponents were bandits equipped with axes and swords. They swung their weapons. They were confused at first by Andre’s splendor but gained confidence due to their belief in their numerical superiority.

However, that only lasted for a short moment. Andre’s sleek swordsmanship stopped their breaths. There was no gory battle with blood and flesh. One pierce that gracefully penetrated the enemy’s weak points. Fluid techniques.

All the enemies were destroyed. White Knight Andre turned softly. The female NPC, who had been threatened by the bandits, stared at him blankly. Andre approached and grabbed her hand. Then he kissed the back of her hand and winked softly.

“Lady. I took care of the opponents. Please rest assured.”

A sweet smile! Then the video faded out.

Han Yeori poked Ian’s side. “So cool. He is a real Prince Charming. Isn’t that right? Boss-nim?”

However, Ian knew the reality so he couldn’t nod. Han Yeori giggled and went back to the counter. Ian wanted to erase his memories, no he wanted to clean his eyes and

forget he ever saw this video.

Ian read the comments. At first, there were compliments.

└ Milky Andre: I'm Andre's fan! ^^ Continue the video! Have strength Andre!

└ Fatal White Knight: >^<

I want to see Andre every day... Where is it? The answer to my problems... Andre's pink lips... Chu...

└ White Cacao: The background is Hesse Mountain! I will also kiss..."

└ Jung Min's Mother: Andre,,, a wonderful young man,,, ~^^

I want my daughter to play the game like Andre,,, ~~?^^

Please continue to do justice „~~~! ㅎ ㅎ ㅎ

└ Yiyu's Mother: I am the same as well,,, ~^^ our children are good,,, ㅎ ㅎ

However, the comments gradually changed.

└ Shochu is Tasty: Damn,,, this labor,,, to me,,, I'm not going to apologize,,, look at the eyes,,, a handsome man pretending to be good,,, ~! Don't tremble,,, reveal your nature,,, kyack,,, spit! Justice? Crockta is the best ~

└ Mt. Seolack Falcon: Aigoo,,, Hyung-nim,,, this comment,,, ㅎ ㅎ,, mountaineering club... why don't you come... Hyung-nim... lonely.

└ Shochu is Tasty: Damn,,, I'm busy,,, kaack,, never,,, return,,, you should,,, live well~~~

└ Altruism with Long Hair: ——Pretending to be good to get women~ don't talk to men like that —— don't tremble ——

└ Going to be an Orc: This person is the definition of justice? Crockta is the definition of justice. I promise that he will be hit by Crockta.

└ Orc King: ㄱ ㄱ ㄱ ㄱ ㄱ ㄱ When he meets Crockta ㄱ ㄱ ㄱ ㄱ take a video and upload

it 日入ㅋㅋㅋ

└ Bul'tar Crockta: ㅋㅋㅋ Crockta will twist him up ㅋㅋㅋ A real man vs. a rural village gangster.

└ Xylitol One Shot: Are you talking about the definition of justice again? Where did this come from? Did Andre save a village like Crockta? Did he create a storm before leaving. What did he do except act good in front of women? ㄹㄹ

└ Barking Dog: Bark bark! Bark bark bark! Grrrr bark!

└ Moderation: How irritating... When I see a video of Crockta, I get a thrill... My hands and feet...

└ Philosopher: This friend is only brilliant when he is catching weak opponents. I miss Crockta.

Ian shook his head.

“.....” His shoulders started to shake. “... Kuk... Cough...”

Ian's shoulders moved up and down as he couldn't help laughing.

“Puhuhu... puhuhuhut...!”

Sometimes the standards of the world were so different from his.

But. This wasn't so different from his viewpoint.

“Ah. That's right. Crockta is the definition of justice. It is in the eyes of the beholder.”

Gradually, the comments increased and it became 'Crockta vs. Andre.' Andre's fans and his anti-fans engaged in a keyboard battle. In particular, Andre had recently said he wanted to fight Crockta so this remarks became more intense.

The two characters of justice. The women who had a crush on White Knight Andre!
The men who supported Orc Warrior Crockta!

Han Yeori sighed as she watched Ian laughing.

“Why is he coming like that more and more...”

CHAPTER 128

NORTHERN LAW (1)

Crockta got up from his spot.

He came back but there was no one around. Tiyo and Anor's bed, where they should've been lying together, was empty. The sun seen through the window was already almost overhead.

It was daytime. This was Spinoa, where the bloody battle had occurred. The city of dark elves had collapsed. Only a few buildings remained, so the survivors slept in tents around the world tree. Then in the daytime, they started rebuilding the village under the blessing of the world tree.

Crockta went out and saw dark elves in the corridor. They were nursing injured soldiers. They jumped in surprise when they saw Crockta. There was a mix of admiration, awe, gratitude, and fear displayed in their eyes.

Crockta was their friend, but now he was the orc great chieftain. He had the power to break the north at any time.

Crockta greeted them first, "It is good to see you."

"Crockta, you woke up."

Only some people knew that Crockta was cursed by the stars, so they thought that he was just resting in bed. Crockta smiled. He still sported a wicked face, but it looked better when he smiled.

"Have you been well in the meantime?"

"Yes."

"....."

There was an ambiguous silence. Crockta nodded and passed by them. Then their voices were heard from behind, "Thank you very much, Northern Hero Crockta."

“I will never forget the grace that saved Spinoa.”

Crockta stopped in his tracks. He had seen a lot of ruins. Those who lost everything and became refugees due to the wars. They had nowhere to go and despair filled their eyes. The same was true for Spinoa.

Nevertheless, they were thanking him. Was he really someone who deserved those words? The city was in ruins and he had only protected a fraction of it. He never knew what to say to this. But Crockta had learned a lot from Elder Lord. Now he had something to say. Crockta raised his thumbs towards them and said, “I will ask for meat for dinner. Bul’tar!”

Crockta winked. The dark elves smiled at his words.

Crockta left the building with powerful steps and felt sober as he once again saw the devastated scenery of Spinoa. The sun drenched landscape made even the ruins seem beautiful. It wasn’t because of the simple form, but because of the appearance of those sweating to rebuild what they lost.

“They are enthusiastic.”

There weren’t only dark elves are the restoration sites. There were orcs. The northern orcs discovered Crockta and struck their chests as they said, “I greet the great chieftain!”

“Great chieftain!” They shouted.

However, Crockta shook his head. He said he didn’t need such formalities, but they didn’t listen.

“You’ve come, Great Chieftain.”

“You don’t need to call me that.”

“The great chieftain is the great chieftain.”

Surka approached.

He had a high rank in the Great Clan, along with Hammerchwi. Thanks to his advice, Crockta was able to force Calmahart into a one-on-one duel. He was a person who

remembered his honor, even under the madness of 'Tribulation.'

"We are in the process of dividing the work sites with the dark elves."

"Good job. That's good."

The war ended dramatically as Crockta became the great chieftain. The red light surrounding the orcs had faded away. Many orcs were ashamed and confused by what they had done. As the great chieftain, Crockta ordered them to join the dark elves and restore the damage.

However, it wasn't easy to get rid of the enmity between the two species. They were enemies. Even if they were under the influence of another being, it didn't change the fact that the orcs had trampled on the families and cities of the dark elves.

So the dark elves and orcs were working separately from each other.

"Ohh! Crockta! You finally showed up *dot!*"

Tiyo's voice was heard from the side and interrupted the awkward mood. Tiyo was helping the dark elves with the restoration work, while black dust covered his face.

"I thought you were trying to get out of work because you didn't come back for a while."

It was the same for Anor. Anor was helping up by raising some bones. Considering the hearts of those who just finished the war, it was the body of a monster, not a dark elf or orc. The skeleton ogre was grabbing and lifting rocks.

"Work, go to work Crockta!"

Surka's eyes widened as Crockta walked forward.

"Why is great chieftain...?"

"Surka. I am Crockta, not the great chieftain!"

Surka nodded at Crockta's words. "I understand."

"I want to work."

Crockta put the greatsword down beside him. Then he rolled up his sleeves. Right now, the buildings in Spinoa were being created with the branches of the world tree. The opportunity to build with divine wood from the world tree wasn't common. Thanks to the emergency situation, the world tree was trying to rebuild Spinoa, even if it had to exhaust its power.

Crockta carried the thick branches of the world tree like they were nothing. Then he started moving towards a construction site.

"Truly the great chieftain!"

"Ohhhh! The great chieftain is working directly!"

"Follow the great chieftain!"

"From now on, don't rest!"

The orcs cheered. For those who only experienced the harsh reign of Calmahart, it was the first time a great chieftain took the initiative to work first. Once Crockta started to work, the atmosphere among the orcs changed. The northern orcs followed the great chieftain.

As Crockta continued to work, he saw a familiar face.

Hammerchwi. He was hammering in a nail with his battle hammer. He swung his hammer with rapid movements before discovering Crockta.

"The great chieftain has come."

"Hammerchwi. We meet again."

At one time, they had different beliefs and exchanged weapons. Of course, the result was Crockta's clean sweep. Hammerchwi might've foreseen this future then.

"How is work? Aren't you tired at your age?"

"What are you talking about? I am the great Warrior Hammerchwi. This is still a long way to go before I get tired."

"A lot of sweat is flowing."

Hammerchwi was covered in sweat. He wiped at his forehead and neck. It was damp. He laughed and wiped it off with his shirt.

“Well, I think sweat is better than blood.”

That made sense. Hammerchwi smiled again. Crockta nodded. He tapped Hammerchwi’s shoulder and whisper as he passed by.

“As long as you are alive. Bul’tar.”

Hammerchwi replied to Crockta’s back.

“The great chieftain as well. Bul’tar!”

Crockta turned at his answer. But Hammerchwi just smiled and continued his hammering. The orc who crushed many enemies with his terrible hammer, the great warrior of the Great Clan called Hammerchwi.

But he seemed to look better with a work hammer than a combat hammer. The warriors following Hammerchwi listened to his instructions and were busy raising the building. If he was born on the continent, he might’ve been a great carpenter instead of a warrior.

Like Grant, he might’ve become a craftsman finding his aptitude after being a warrior. Or maybe he would be an orc who never picked up a weapon, a person who worked during the day and drank at night.

“Surka.”

“Yes.”

“Does Hammerchwi have children?”

“Yes. It isn’t just one or two.”

Crockta stared at him. Surka shrugged.

“He has 11. I heard one was born not too long ago.”

Crockta nodded. He felt somehow reassured. “I’m glad. Orcs should be thinking about

the future.”

The orcs in the north also weren’t undamaged. Countless soldiers had died. As the dark elves stabilized, the orcs should take care of themselves. He didn’t intend to be the great chieftain for long, but he couldn’t help thinking about this.

“Tomorrow, the agreement will be signed.”

Crockta had climbed to the position of great chieftain, ending the war between the dark elves and orcs. They were supposed to declare an end to the war, forget the conflicts and sign an agreement to maintain peace. The date was tomorrow. Of course, one of the subjects of the agreement was Zelkian, leader of the dark elves and agent of the world tree. The other was the great chieftain of the northern orcs, Crockta.

“Surka.”

“Yes.”

“Do you want to try fighting me once?”

Surka’s eyes widened. He noticed the look in Crockta’s eyes and nodded.

“I understand.”



The two of them stood in a deserted spot. In the background, there was the distant sound of orcs working as both of them raised their weapons. The greatsword, Ogre Slayer. A masterpiece of the Golden Anvil Clan.

However, it had sharpened in Crockta’s hands as it cut down many enemies. Unlike the blades that became dull after repeatedly being soaked in the blood and flesh of the enemies, Ogre Slayer was different as it evolved into a greatsword with a completely different atmosphere.

At the beginning, Ogre Slayer was a shining sword. Now it looked like a sword that had gone through all sorts of hardships. The masterpiece of the Golden Anvil Clan was completed in Crockta’s hands.

“A good sword. It can cause chaos.”

But Surka's axe also wasn't ordinary. It was 'Blood Rain,' the heirloom axe that he received from his father Shiktulla. It was a treasure that swept over numerous high-level enemies in the north. To Surka, it was the best symbol of a Steel Axe tribe member.

The two forces met. Their weapons struck each other. There was a loud sound as the greatsword and axe met. The eerie sound of two weapons clashing drifted along the wind. They moved around each other like they were wind magicians, skillfully penetrating through any gaps.

Surka was different from Calmahart, as he boasted brilliant axe techniques.

Crockta smiled. This fight had its own charm. Crockta's speed increased. The realm of the Pinnacle. Crockta's greatsword aimed at the enemy, like he had pulled on a line in the world. The axe passed by his cheek while the greatsword narrowly missed the neck. Blood flowed.

He grinned. Rather than exchanging a few words of respect, they could communicate more by fighting.

Warrior and warrior. They were fighting.

"What are you fighting for Surka?"

Crockta shouted as he pushed Surka with his shoulder. Surka grinned as he was suddenly off balance.

"To be great chieftain!"

Then he jumped and his axe descended towards Crockta.

Kwaang!

An explosive sound was heard for the first time.

"Kill the great chieftain and become the great chieftain!"

Surka laughed. An orc of the north. Crockta didn't hate this look. Orc warriors should be able to laugh while fighting for their lives.

“What about once you become the great chieftain?” Crockta deflected the axe and kicked Surka’s abdomen. Surka fell down and Ogre Slayer pursued him. He rolled across the ground to avoid it but in the end, Crockta’s greatsword pointed at his neck.

Crockta asked, “What do you want to do once you become the great chieftain?”

Surka struggled against Crockta’s foot on his chest before giving up. He looked up at Crockta and smiled.

“I will change the Great Clan.”

“How?”

“To what it used to be!”

Crockta removed his foot and extended a hand. Surka grabbed Crockta’s hand and got up. He gazed at Crockta and added. “Then we will become like the orcs of the continent.”

The land of orc warriors who regarded honor as their lives. He couldn’t help feeling admiration after Crockta told him about the continent. Surka wanted to restore the traditions of the continent, just like the old northern orcs. He wanted to not feel ashamed as he fought, and to know that death wasn’t in vain. He wanted to restore that spirit.

Surka laughed and added. “But Crockta is the great chieftain, so I won’t need to become the great chieftain.”

“Kulkulkul.”

Crockta laughed. Surka laughed. After finished the fight, Crockta asked something else.

“Surka. Are you the strongest here except for me?”

“There isn’t a proper ranking but probably. Apart from Calmahart, I’ve never been defeated by anyone.”

“How dependable.”

CHAPTER 129

NORTHERN LAW (2)

The agreement began.

Crockta and Zelkian stood on a platform. Crockta came as a savior to help the dark elves but he was now standing as a representative of the orcs. The future was unknown.

The world tree, looking down on Spinoa as always, laid a branch on Zelkian's shoulder. It seemed to somehow be saying congratulations to Crockta. The world tree's branch stooped down as Crockta nodded. It looked like a smile.

The dark elves and orcs were watching them. Their leaders had declared a mutual non-aggression pact, and everyone knew what it meant.

"The agreement is as followed."

Surka and Jenadu handed slates over to their leaders. The agreement was engraved in stone so that it wouldn't fade over time. The people of each species applauded both Crockta and Zelkian.

Orcs and dark elves were divided in the center. Crockta asked for restraint so that the orcs wouldn't offend the dark elves by shouting out 'great chieftain.' The dark elves were the same. Zelkian informed them that the great chieftain and orcs were possessed by the demon named 'Tribulation', so their hearts eased a little bit.

Therefore, there were no concerns about a conflict taking place. Apart from the brief clapping, the area was still.

The agreement concluded that the war would end and that they wouldn't invade each other's territory in the future. If someone violated this pact, they would be punished according to the laws of the area.

For the time being, the orcs would help the dark elves rebuild. In addition, the dark elves' leader and the orc great chieftain would periodically meet. While it was impossible for those killing each other the day before to suddenly become friends, it

was possible if their goal was for this situation to not repeat.

Finally, Zelkian gently hugged Crockta. The agreement was over. It was a symbolic event for everyone to see, so it didn't drag out for long. Now they had to work to rebuild the city.

At that moment, Crockta raised a hand and said, "All the orcs are gathered together."

The orcs stopped. It was the great chieftain's first call. The dark elves returned to their positions. In addition, Zelkian was watching from the side.

"I killed Calmahart. But since I was an enemy yesterday, not everyone is convinced that I am the great chieftain." Crockta looked down at the orcs. Multiple eyes were staring at him. "So I am going to give you a chance."

Crockta pulled out his greatsword and placed it on his shoulder.

"Whoever is good. If you have the will to become the great chieftain, come forward."

A declaration that said he would accept any duel! The orcs started murmuring. As he said, Crockta was an outsider who abruptly appeared as their leader. However, he was the powerful warrior who had killed Calmahart. There would surely be a few warriors who wouldn't let this pass.

"I will go first!"

It was the first time Crockta saw the face that came forward. However, he was dressed in the clothing of the Great Clan's warriors.

"I am from the Eagle Blade Tribe, the Great Clan warrior Karhak!"

Crockta came down from the platform and responded, "I am the orc from the continent, Great Chieftain Crockta."

No other words were needed as both simultaneously swung their weapons. Karhak was a strong warrior. His halberd strikes were hard to deal with. Even if the blade was avoided, he had the technique of turning it by changing his grip on the steel handle.

However, Crockta couldn't be shaken by such techniques. He had gone through countless fights in the realm of the Pinnacle. His heart and soul were always staring at

the enemy's reality. Crockta avoided all of Karhak's strikes. Ogre Slayer hit his abdomen.

"Keooooook!"

Karhak flew through the air and landed in the middle of the group of orcs. He lost consciousness. The nearby orcs carried him to the infirmary. There were more challengers. They were the best warriors in the northern tribes and great warriors in the Great Clan.

All of them were defeated as quickly and badly as Karhak. They struck at Crockta in various ways, but the results were all the same.

"Next."

Crockta declared after knocking down another contender. Crockta had grown further through all his battles with Calmahart. He embraced the power of the Hero rank.

[Status Window]

'Northern Conqueror' Crockta, Orc Warrior.

Level: 117

Achievement Points: 1,924,800

Assimilation: 89%

Abilities:

Herculean Strength (Hero)

Revival (Hero)

Heart Sword (Hero)

Fighting Spirit (Hero)

Inside the Spirit (Hero)

Tattoo (Hero)

Roar (Hero)

Creatures Butcher (Pinnacle)

Grey God's Eyes (Outside the Ratings)

Art of Magic (Rare)]

When he reached the Hero rank, the splendid skill names suddenly calmed down. The explanation disappeared and only a short feature remained. Crockta liked this more.

The next challenger appeared. It was a familiar face.

"It has been a while. Crockta."

"You."

An orc who Crockta first met in the Kapur Clan when he came to the north. It was the young orc warrior Rakuta, who wanted to endure the villainous Kapur so he could defeat him and change the tribe. The fact that he was here meant one thing.

"Kapur?"

Rakuta grinned as he responded, "Perished by my hands."

In the end, he was punished by his tribe's warrior. Crockta smiled. He knew that Rakuta would one day kill Kapur. It was the will of the young warrior, Rakuta. It was just faster than Crockta expected.

"It was possible because I never forgot Crockta's words."

Before saying farewell, Rakuta had asked Crockta. How could he be strong? Crockta had only one answer. Indomitable will!

Crockta nodded. "Good. Then attack."

Rakuta charged at him with a good momentum. But in the end, he became like the other contenders. He lay on the ground and admitted defeat. The gap in power was obvious.

No more challengers appeared. Now Crockta was fully recognized as the great chieftain. In this position, Crockta made a declaration.

"Now I believe no one will complain that I am the great chieftain."

The orcs struck their chests. There was only one way to become the great chieftain. Be the best! Crockta proved his overwhelming power in this spot.

"I, Crockta, will make a declaration as the great chieftain." All orc eyes turned to him. "I will step down from the position of the great chieftain."

As Crockta finished speaking, the orcs stared at him with shock. He had just defeated all challengers and truly became the great chieftain. Now he was leaving. There were some cases with the great chieftain stepped down, but that was often when they couldn't fight due to old age or injury. There were no cases when an overwhelming strong chieftain, like Crockta, stepped down on his own.

"I have to go back to the continent. Therefore, I..."

Crockta found Tiyo and Anor among the audience. They smiled and nodded. Crockta also smiled. He still had a lot of work to do.

"I will name Surka as my successor."

Surka, who was standing on the podium, opened his eyes widely. It was a face that showed he never imagined it at all. Crockta held Surka's shoulder and pushed him forward.

"If you have a complaint, go to Surka right now!"

The orcs were quiet.

Surka already proved his strength on the battlefield. He might've been obscured by the monster called Calmahart, but he was a true warrior who proved his courage in

many battles as the best warrior of the Steel Axe Tribe.

In the past, Calmahart had barely beaten him to the position of great chieftain. It was only afterward that Calmahart, who was enhanced by Tribulation, became a ghastly monster with divine skills.

“What is with the sudden action, Great Chieftain?” Surka asked in a small voice. “Why did you bother beating any of them?”

That’s right. If he was going to step down anyway, why did he take on challengers and defeat them all? it wasn’t convincing that he would leave the moment he proved himself genuinely strong.

Crockta replied, “This is because the northern orcs are arrogant.”

“Huh?”

“I wanted to break your idea that the Great Clan is the best. I am evaluating you as a warrior from Orcrox, not the great chieftain. You are weak.”

The orcs’ expressions distorted at Crockta’s words. It was an insult to them.

“If you invaded the continent, you would’ve all been wiped out. The world is far wider than you think, and there are as many strong people as there are stars.”

Calmahart was clearly strong. The power of Tribulation meant it would be hard for him to find an opponent on the continent. But the northern orcs couldn’t overwhelm the many strong players on the continent.

“You lack the strength and the will.”

Crockta thought it was ridiculous for them to attack the continent. It was the continent where orcs, humans, gnomes, elves, and dwarves joined their strengths to create civilizations. Those who barely survived in the desolate north couldn’t beat them.

“Keep this in mind.”

The orcs were quiet. The person saying this was none other than Crockta, the person who defeated Calmahart, who they thought was the strongest person alive. They couldn’t object to any of his words.

He placed the greatsword on his back. Crockta walked down to the bottom of the platform. The sound of his footsteps was heard clearly in the orcs' silence. Just before he completely stepped down from the platform.

"Crockta." It was Surka. "You are irresponsible."

Crockta's eyebrows twitched at Surka's words. Surka looked at him and explained, "As you say, we are weak. But isn't it too irresponsible to just say that and then leave? What if, after I become the great chieftain, I destroy the treaty and start the war again?"

"....."

"Whether we are weak or not, the dark elves will be destroyed."

Crockta narrowed his eyes. Surka continued speaking. "If you don't like it, then teach us."

"About what?"

"How can we become strong like you?!"

The orcs raised their heads. Surka pointed at them and said.

"Teach us so that if another Calmahart appears, we won't be corrupted. If you can convince us, I am willing to be the great chieftain."

Surka grinned. Crockta realized his intent. Then he started laughing. The eyes of countless orcs stared at him. They could see his tiny movements, his gait, even his chest moving up and down from his breathing. But Crockta wasn't afraid of their gazes.

"It is the ancients laws that made me what I am."

They could keep it, or they could break it. There was no absolute law in this world. But if they remembered this, when they were lost, they could raise their eyes and find the path again.

"I will let you know the seven honorable laws of the ancient orcs that the north has forgotten."

Surka listened closely. Crockta told him there was such a thing, but he never actually

heard the laws.

“Listen carefully.”

Crockta started to speak the laws of the warriors. From the ancient orcs to the warriors of Orcrox, from Lenox to Crockta, now the ancient laws were being relayed to the northern orcs.

Do not forsake faith, don't persecute the weak, don't attack those who abandoned their weapons. Don't succumb to injustice or shame the gods, pay back any favors or vengeance and protect the powerless.

Prove their honor through these seven laws.

The orcs were quiet. In the past, all orcs knew this. Today, it was something that no one kept.

After the division between the north and the rest of the continent, the law of the strong spread in the north. The strongest orc took everything. The great chieftain was the law. It was why they gradually forgot their old values.

But after a long time, the ancient laws of the orcs returned to them.

Kung.

Surka stomped his feet. Everyone looked at him.

“I am Surka, the great chieftain.”

He lifted Blood Rain. There was no orc in the north who didn't know this weapon. It was the wicked axe that created a river of blood in Surka's hands. Surka shouted. “I follow Great Chieftain Crockta!”

The orcs started murmuring. Surka continued speaking.

“I say this as Great Chieftain Surka! I might've inherited the status of great chieftain, but I will always follow the true great chieftain of the north. I will hold this position until Crockta comes back!”

Surka moved Blood Rain. “The laws he spoke are now the laws of the north! If there

are any complaints, come to me now!"

Surka's aura exploded. His energy spread out. A chill went down the spines of the orcs. They remembered. Before Calmahart, Surka had been the one closest to becoming the great chieftain. His axe got the name 'Blood Rain' because whenever he waved his axe, a shower of blood would fly into the air.

"Kill me first," Surka declared.

".....!"

None of them could open their mouths. Surka's willpower spread over them. It lasted long enough for them to understand the meaning.

The orcs moved.

Kung!

They slapped his chest. All orcs placed their hands on their chests as a salute to Surka. The movement started at the front and soon spread to all the orcs. A grand spectacle. Every orc placed their hand on their chest and stared at Surka. The northern orcs recognized Surka as the new great chieftain. Surka nodded before turning around.

"I look forward to it."

He struck his chest as he looked at Crockta.

The Northern Conqueror Crockta, who rebuilt the north. And the one who followed the great chieftain, it was the birth of True Warchief Surka.

CHAPTER 130

COME BACK (1)

Crockta was troubled.

“A warrior... doesn’t forsake faith *dot...*!”

“Ahahat! Great chieftain! Chest thump!”

“A warrior doesn’t persecute the weak *dot...*!”

“Loyalty, loyalty! Thump thump!”

...Did they want to die?

“Prove your honor *dot!*”

“Kuock... now the true great chieftain is Crockta!”

“How wonderful *dot*. Bul-tar *dot!*”

“Bul’tar!”

Crockta looked at them. They giggled despite seeing his menacing eyes.

“Hey, look at Crockta’s eyes! Anor! The great chieftain is staring at me *dot!* Keep quiet *dot!*”

“Ah, we’ll be in trouble. We have to stay quiet.”

They had been teasing Crockta ever since they left Spinoa. Crockta closed his eyes and endured it.

That’s right. Those two were just a poor gnome and a dark elf who didn’t understand the beauty and sincerity of orcs.

“You don’t understand the hot hearts of me and my millions of orc brothers...”

The moment of surprise when Surka became the new great chieftain and recognized Crockta as his leader. It was a historic moment when the laws of the orcs were passed onto the north. The northern orcs had stared at him piously and struck their chests. History would remember it as a great day.

“A million. How serious.”

“I understand *dot*.”

“Later you can kill Calamhart ten times over.”

“It is possible *dot*. Anor is insightful.”

Crockta became sad. Didn't they know that the word 'millions' was just used as an idiom? At that moment, in Crockta's eyes, they really looked like they numbered over a million. The dark elves watching the scene were also very impressed.

It was only Tiyo and Anor who trembled and cringed in the crowd. Their tongues had twisted when he talked about the warrior's laws, but they desperately endured it.

“Once again, I...”

“Okay, okay.”

“Anyway, let's go *dot*!”

“.....”

They left Spinoa.

Many things had happened. They traversed the north, fighting the orcs under the great chieftain Calmahart. In the end, he killed the great chieftain and established the continent orcs' laws in the north. Surka would follow the laws and lead the orcs well until the north and the continent united.

“It's been a while since we've been there last *dot*!”

They were heading for the Black Forest. Like they had promised before leaving, they were going to revisit the hermit of the Black Forest, the black dragon Gushantimur. They would meet the creatures there and grow while competing with each other

again, before asking about the whereabouts of Tiyo's father.

Their schedule for the future would be decided there.

"It was fun *dot*. I'm glad I came to the north *dot*."

Tiyo said while tapping the head of the caruk, who cried out. Crockta agreed.

He was told by Gordon to seek the truth at the Temple of the Fallen God. Then Crockta discovered the truth: Elder Lord wasn't a simple game but another dimension. But this was still lacking.

Who was Gordon? There was also the ulterior motives of the gray woman, the god who told him the truth and the system that ran Elder Lord. He didn't know if these questions could be answered, but Crockta would see it through to the end.

He had something to do. There was no new information yet, but someday he would find the answer if he kept wandering around Elder Lord. Furthermore, he didn't like Choi Hansung's actions on the continent so Crockta would have to face him once.

And more than anything else.

"Riding a caruk isn't that good. Compared to my favorite ride."

He changed his car recently. The ranker payout was indeed beyond imagination. He hadn't informed Yiyu yet because he enjoyed driving around alone, but every person passing by would look at the expensive supercar.

Hooray for Elder Lord.

"Now, go!"

Crockta drove the caruk quickly. Tiyo followed. He was followed by Anor, who was still clumsy when it came to riding. They quickly entered the Black Forest.



An arrow flew as soon as they entered the Black Forest. This arrow was familiar. It was only one arrow but it had the power to deal tremendous havoc.

The famous goblin archer, Kiao! It was him.

And his adversary was Tiyo. Tiyo immediately fired General, a splendid energy pouring out from the muzzle and colliding with the arrow.

“Only this much *dot!*”

The two forces repeatedly moved towards each other. Then an explosion was caused. Crockta and Anor rolled around the ground as they were caught in the aftermath.

“What the hell is this?”

“I didn’t know it would be like this when an arrow and magic bullet hit each other.”

They hid behind the trees to escape the aftermath. The caruks shook. Crockta patted them to calm them down.

“Kiyoooooh!”

Tiyo released General’s full strength. Now General, that had become Vulcan, poured out countless bursts of energy. A fearsome power! In the end, both powers emitted a bright light as they collided in the air. General was a great artifact, but it was also impressive that Kiao could pack so much power in one arrow.

Tiyo shrugged. “Huhuhu! Kiao! Trying to stop me like this won’t work *dot!*”

The answer came from behind him. “Of course not *kyak!*”

“.....!”

The cold chill of an arrowhead touched the back of Tiyo’s neck.

“You used a lot of power but failed to catch my foot *kyak!* I am able to move freely while shooting arrows!”

That’s right. Tiyo had continued to shoot magic bullets from General. However, ironically, Kiao had relaxed after seeing the gnome’s demonstration. Tiyo wanted to overwhelm him with his power. Vulcan was great at continuous firing but Kiao’s strikes were even stronger.

While Tiyo stopped the storm caused by the arrow, Kiao moved freely and appeared behind Tiyo. Then he waited until Tiyo stopped. It was his defeat.

“Kuoooh...”

Tiyo thought he had become stronger but he had lost again.

Kiao grinned. “I heard the news kyak! Congratulations, but we weren’t just playing around kyak!”

“Kuoooh...”

The creatures in the Black Forest hadn’t neglected their training.

Crockta and Anor approached the agitated Tiyo. Crockta raised a hand to his shoulder.

“Crockta...”

Hot hands! Indeed, his brother and friend Crockta came to comfort him. Tiyo smiled and tried to answer that he was okay.

Crockta grinned and made a sound. “Pff.”

An obvious derision! Then he led the caruks past him into the Black Forest.

“.....!”

It was revenge for the teasing!

Tiyo shook as he looked at Anor. He always teased Crockta with Tiyo, so surely Anor would comfort him. Anor reached out with a sad expression. The moment that Tiyo was about to grasp his hand. Anor formed a fist and extended his index finger.

Then he waved it from side to side.

“Defeated. Defeated.”

“.....!”

“Hihihit.”

Then Anor followed behind Crockta. Tiyo felt despair. Kiao, who defeated him, remained by his side.

“This is called cause and effect *kyak!* You should build up your heart!”

“Shut up *dot!*”

“Don’t be angry just because I gave you some advice *kyak!*”

“Next time I will win *dot!*”

“Don’t play around *kyak!*”

“Dirty old bastard!”

The two of them fought even when walking into the Black Forest.

Gushantimur’s lair.



Gushantimur’s lair hadn’t changed. It was a beautiful castle where the creatures were practicing. The cold-faced man, Gushantimur welcomed them while holding a long sword.

“It has been a while.”

“I came back.”

“It has been a while *dot!*”

Gushantimur nodded. He looked Crockta up and down. Then his eyes widened. It seemed like he had already grasped the changes in Crockta.

“Crockta. Amazing.”

“It is thanks to you.”

Crockta was now in the Hero realm. A person like Gushantimur would be able to feel it. After reaching this state, he became more aware of Gushantimur’s power. He had a

tremendous presence. As Crockta viewed him through the realm of a Hero who twisted causality, Gushantimur visibly seemed like a dragon.

However. He felt like the difference had narrowed.

“There is still a lot left to go.”

Crockta laughed and Gushantimur nodded. “That’s right. Let’s deal with it after unpacking.”

Anor had been caught by the lich and skeletons. Anor tried to flee but he was caught tightly by the lich’s skeletons. There was still a long way to go before his phobia was cured.



They rested and unburdened their hearts.

The tool was the sword.

Crockta exchanged blows with Gushantimur. Crockta reached the Hero realm but he still wasn’t used to dealing with it. Every time the swords met, he would look at Ogre Slayer with a sad expression.

He didn’t get the same feeling as when he faced Calmahart.

“You will soon get the power, Crockta.” Gushantimur said. “The situation is different. The power to break causality is impossible with an ordinary will, so it is rather strange if you could use that power at will after just learning it.”

But then Gushantimur showed his power to Crockta. The black dragon Gushantimur of the Black Forest had already reached the Hero level.

“It has been a while since I reached this stage.” As soon as Crockta’s greatsword moved, Gushantimur’s long sword passed through it and pointed to Crockta’s neck. It was close to the power of magic.

Crockta surrendered. He had become the great chieftain of the north, but he couldn’t win against Gushantimur.

“What do I need to do to win against you?”

He couldn't imagine a terrain beyond the Hero realm. Was such a thing possible?

Gushantimur smiled. “There is a legend that it is possible to reach a level higher than Hero.”

“I can't imagine it.” Crockta shook his head and Gushantimur swung his long sword. Crockta reflexively raised Ogre Slayer. However, his long sword went to the opposite side and the tip pointed at Crockta's face.

“Ugh...!”

“No, I'm not just saying it.”

“What...” Crockta's eyes widened at Gushantimur's words. “Surely not...”

“That's right. Among those who reached the Hero realm, a few managed to become a legend.”

[You have received information about the Legend rating for the first time. Achievement points have been gained.]

The message windows popped up.

[But it is ridiculous for you to reach the Legend rank when you have barely crossed the threshold of the Hero rank. Learn from the Hero ranked power!]

[I am cheering for you!]

Crockta felt a chill as he saw the message windows. It was a sign that the woman was constantly watching.

“What type of power is it?”

If Crockta hadn't heard about the Hero rating from Gushantimur, he would've been defeated by Calmahart. He received a clue to the Hero rating from Gushantimur and was able to eventually achieve it.

Crockta watched him with expectant eyes.

But Gushantimur shook his head. “I haven't reached that level so I don't know.”

Crockta nodded.

“Huhu, then I will reach the Legend rank and tell you about it. It will be a way for me to repay my grace.” He smiled and posed. Gushantimur burst out laughing. It wasn't a big laugh but his face brightened in front of Crockta.

“I will look forward to it.”

Tiyo was approaching in the distance. His body was tattered again from fighting with Kiao. Still, this time he managed to counterattack and strike Kiao.

“Ignorant gnome kyak...”

“Shut up *dot*.”

“Using a punch instead of a bow! A cowardly and violent gnome kyak!”

“Don't be stupid. If I have a bow then you wouldn't even be my match *dot*.”

“A bow kyak! I'll blow you away!”

“Try it *dot*!”

It was still hard to tell if the relationship between the two of them was good or not. Tiyo stood in front of Gushantimur.

“Gushantimur! I've done enough to tell me something important *dot*!”

Gushantimur nodded.

Tiyo asked. “Where did my father Hedor go?”

“The brave adventurer Hedor.”

Anor also approached. He was staggering under the arm of a skeleton. Crockta waited for Gushantimur’s answer as well. Their movements in the future would change depending on the answer.

But Gushantimur gave an unexpected reply.

CHAPTER 131

COME BACK (2)

“Really *dot*?”

Tiyo questioned. Gushantimur nodded. Tiyo looked at both Crockta and Anor with a frown.

“Well... is this good *dot*...?”

“It’s good,” Anor quickly replied.

Crockta also nodded. “I think so as well.”

“Then... I came to the north for nothing *dot*...”

“No, you gained a lot of things after coming to the north.”

Tiyo regained his vitality at Crockta’s words. “Indeed, that’s right *dot*. If I hadn’t come to the north, General wouldn’t have changed so nicely *dot*.”

General was still in the form of Vulcan, but it was changing slightly every day. As Tiyo’s ability with General grew, he was evolving it into the form he wanted. Someday, Tiyo might change it into the form of a rocket launcher.

“Good *dot*. Anor! I will let you see it properly *dot*!”

That’s right. Tiyo’s father Hedor had left the north a long time ago. He was on the continent.

“Father is on the continent but he didn’t stop by his home. I will beat him up when I find him *dot*.”

The exact destination wasn’t known, but according to Gushantimur’s memory, Hedor was aiming for the area south of the continent, below Quantas. He wanted to go to a place where humans and dwarves gathered. In addition, it was a land where users were swarming the streets.

“When will you leave?” Gushantimur asked.

He didn’t reveal any emotion behind his calm expression, but Crockta felt strangely sorry towards him. He exchanged a look with Tiyo and both of them understood. They didn’t know when they could come back to the Black Forest, where they met the black dragon Gushantimur and the creatures sharpening their craft.

“This time we will stay longer to polish our skills.” Crockta looked at Tiyo and Anor before adding, “There will be tougher adventures in the future.”

Tiyo and Anor reacted in a conflicting manner to Crockta’s words, “Heh, I’m looking forward to it *dot!*”

“Just... continent tour... uh, no...”

Gushantimur nodded. “Well, good. These guys have been waiting for you.”

They looked in the direction that Gushantimur pointed. Everyone was astonished. There were three masters standing there. New powerhouses who would lead them to a higher ground! A huge cyclops raised a fist as he looked at Crockta. In addition, there was a centaur with the upper body of a human and the lower body of a horse.

And...

An unidentified person covered in a hood laughed at Anor without revealing their face.

“I want you to enjoy my lair properly.”



Time passed.

The confrontation with the cyclops was a tremendous help to Crockta. It didn’t mean that he reached a higher level in the sword. Just,

“Kuaaaaaaaaaah!”

“Kuoooooooooh!”

He got used to fighting on the higher ground and forgot things. The feelings of being

an orc warrior were revived. They had long since lost both their weapons. They just hit each other with their bodies. The body of an orc wasn't able to survive a massive cyclops, but his physical abilities exceeded common sense after reaching the Hero level.

They grabbed each other's hands in a battle of strength. It was difficult considering the difference in their hand size, but Crockta showed a tremendous grip as he placed his fingers between the cyclops and pushed.

They also used their arm strength to push at each other.

"Kuwaaaah!"

As the cyclops exerted his strength, Crockta was pushed back.

"Bul'tarrrr!"

Crockta used the strength as he spun his body around. The cyclops was thrown by the force. Crockta rushed forward straight away.

"Waaaah!"

He made a fist and punched. However, he couldn't do any damage to the cyclops' thick bicep. So he went straight for the joints.

"What?"

The cyclops was consumed by the unfamiliar pain on the joints and instantly declared surrender, realizing that it was a technique he couldn't endure.

It was Crockta's victory. There were both victories and defeats, but after a few days, Crockta's winning rate increased. The cyclops was forced to admit the crock's growth.

"It is my victory, Hawkeye!"

The cyclops smiled. His one eye was very intense. The brown eye under the double eyelids blazed fiercely, as if it could see into a person. So his name was Hawkeye! There was no match for him in Gushantimur's lair. Only Gushantimur could fight him. For that reason, he laughed at the small orc Crockta at first. But as the battles continued, he acknowledged Crockta as his rival.

Crockta fought him with strength, before surpassing him with technique.

The two of them headed back to the castle with their arm around each other's shoulder. The balance was off due to the difference in height, but it was the most suitable mode for men who sweated and punched each other.

Crockta could see Tiyo far away. He had a face that was worn down from training.

"Ah, it's finished *dot*."

The centaur was giving Tiyo a ride. Tiyo waved with an exhausted expression from the centaur's back.

"Today I showed Hekar what I could do *dot*."

"It is ridiculous to describe what I saw as that."

"You cried out in surprise *dot*."

"I was just wondering about the two-legged flea."

"Do you want to be shot in the back *dot*?"

"I didn't know you were so cowardly."

"What are you saying *dot*!" Tiyo had a new person to fight with, the centaur Hekar.

Anor also came back.

The day was over. They enjoyed dinner in Gushantimur's castle as always. The meals were always great, but today's dishes were carefully prepared with the best ingredients. Liquor was also brought out.

Gushantimur, Crockta's group, and the creatures became drunk that night. This was Gushantimur's consideration.

Today was their last night.



It was the day of farewell. Now they would head back to the continent.

Gushantimur and the other creatures gathered to say farewell. They were all the creatures who had sparred with Crockta's group. They might be classified as creatures, but they were pioneers polishing off their own paths.

One day, they would come out to see the light. Crockta thought that if they didn't come, he would open up the way for them himself. He was no longer a mere warrior, but the great chieftain of the northern orcs, and Righteous Orc Crockta on the continent. He was becoming such an influence.

With these thoughts, Crockta grabbed Hawkeye's hand.

Kwaaack!

It was the grip showdown between two rough males.

Shake shake.

Crockta gritted his teeth. His body started shaking. To be honest, Hawkeye was stronger than him. Crockta gritted his teeth and persisted. He endured the pain in his hand. After a short period of time, Hawkeye laughed and let go of his hand. Crockta touched his greatsword with his tender hand. Hawkeye shrugged.

Tiyo spoke to his two rivals in turn.

"Practice a lot while I'm gone idiot. Don't just rest here!"

"Stop talking nonsense kyak! We should be saying that to you kyak!"

"I will open up better weapons *dot!*"

"Who cares about your weapons kyak!"

"Tsk tsk, this is a really frivolous conversation."

"Stay out of this your bastard *dot!*"

“I agree kyak! Four-legged bastard kyak!”

“The height of the body and the hearts are similar...”

“What *dot*?”

“Cancel it kyak!”

Was this Tiyo’s trademark? He had the ability to create a contest no matter the time or place.

Anor said goodbye to the bones. The hooded person whose identity was unknown, the lich, the skeletons and the zombie undead! Anor hugged them with strangely bleak laughter. He wasn’t afraid of the undead anymore.

“Kelkel... see you again, kuhulhul...”

The lich gave him something as a gift. It was a bone.

Anor rejoiced. “This is the third vertebra bone... kelkel... this precious bone...! Thank you, kelkel...!”

Now he seemed like a psychopathic lich, studying bones and dead bodies deep in the dungeons.

Gushantimur spoke to all of them. Then shortly before saying goodbye, Gushantimur waved towards the Demon’s Mouth, not Crockta. Gushantimur seemed to know something about it. But it didn’t open its mouth.

Gushantimur would tell him if it was a truly necessary story, so Crockta didn’t ask any questions. When he became strong enough to deal with this demon, he would listen to it directly.

Thus, they left Gushantimur’s lair. The creatures accompanied them through the forest. They waved until they couldn’t see each other anymore.

There was nothing else rough to go through. They moved towards the continent on the caruks. The caruks ate well at Gushantimur’s lair, so they ran aggressively.

“Anor.”

“Huh?”

“I have a question *dot*.” Tiyo asked. “Your second mentor *dot*... that hooded person...?”

“Yes.”

“What is his identity *dot*? I couldn’t see because of the hood.”

“Ah... huhuhu... he is...”

Anor’s eyes became distant. Then he looked like a psychopathic lich once again. Crockta and Tiyo shivered at the change.

“Hihit... the moment you see... your spirits will be led to a new world... kelkel... great...!”

“.....!”

“Do you want to know...? His identity...?”

“Ah, no *dot*...”

Crockta looked at Tiyo with eyes filled with blame. Why would he ask a strange question like this?

The madness was still boiling as Anor shouted. “All those who see him properly... ku... huhu... Tekelli-li! Tekelli-li! Tekel... oof oof!”

Crockta eventually moved his caruk and covered Anor’s mouth. Tiyo jumped from his caruk and hit Anor in the neck, knocking him out.

“.....”

“.....”

Crockta and Tiyo exchanged glances. Anor had certainly overcome his shortcomings as a necromancer. But at the same time. He was swallowed by an unknown madness...

“Sorry *dot*... when we go back, I will take you to a temple and receive a blessing...”

“We need to go to the temple...”

Thus, they headed towards the continent. Past the Luklan Mountains and the barren desert in the southern part of the north. It was different from when they came. There were no orcs marching with weapons, and they also didn’t see other species, including the dark elves. Thanks to the war, most of the were trying to survive in their villages.

They eventually reached the limit line dividing the north from the continent. A nondescript black wall. The Despairing Demon’s Mouth had swallowed the unknown being that created it.

There were still many things he didn’t know about the world of Elder Lord.

The ‘Tribulation’ that possessed Calmahart, the unidentified demon that created the behemoth, the Demon’s Mouth that Crockta obtained and the woman he saw in the Temple of the Fallen God. He could feel that they were all connected. But the overall picture was still blurry.

What happened and what did they want?

“Let’s go back.”

“Huhu, my heart is pounding *dot*.”

It wasn’t anything urgent: if he continued struggling through each battle, he would know the truth eventually. So what if he never knew? He just needed to do his job.

“Let’s go *dot*!”

Crockta’s group crossed the black wall. There was a strange feeling. Then the Forest of Creatures spread out in front of their eyes. A lush forest. It was just like the forest that they had left.

But, there was something else.

“...Um.”

“...What is that *dot*?”

Their gazes gathered in one spot. A little bit beyond the bushes. A party was waging a

tough battle against a group of trolls.

CHAPTER 132

MOUNTAIN OF SABRES, FOREST OF SWORDS (1)

Crockta saw the stars on their foreheads. They were users.

Thanks to the north being opened, information about the Forest of Creatures became known to users. After the monster called behemoth had disappeared thanks to Crockta's group, it seemed to become a new hunting ground for users.

They were calmly fighting the trolls in a formation. The warriors stopped the enemies from the front, while the ranged users struck from behind. It was a typical battle formation.

However, their firepower wasn't enough. Even if they attacked, the trolls were strengthened by magic and quickly recovered from the injuries. Then they wielded the clubs and crude weapons towards the group with more force.

A rusty axe was lodged in a user's body.

"Ack!"

"Back!"

"It's too late!"

The surrounding trolls disregarded their opponents and rushed towards the wounded person. They were persistent. They weren't concerned about other attacks. The trolls just kept wielding their weapons towards one person.

The user was struck and fell down. The user was smashed to pieces. The body of the dead user started to turn into white particles.

"Crazy bastards!"

The trolls weren't in a good state, but their wounds were recovering. The origin of the demonic energy in the forest had disappeared, but the remnants left behind were still showing their influence. According to the system messages, it would take 50 years

before the influence disappeared completely. The trolls exposed to this energy were different from the ones they knew. Creatures with their abilities enhanced by the demonic energy!

The trolls rushed back. They aimed at the users, regardless of the bombardment from the magicians. The users set up shields in order to stop the charge.

“Help!”

However, not everyone was capable of dealing with it. Those who didn’t use shields had no way to stop the trolls’ assault. They had to wield their weapons and enter a melee with the trolls.

“I should have a shield as well, dammit!” A warrior with a greatsword jumped to the front.

“What are you doing?”

I thought about it and there is only one answer! Fight!”

“Crazy bastard!”

“I’m going all out!”

He wielded a large claymore. He showed a sophisticated swordsmanship. The trolls moved to surround him, but he persistently moved around to avoid being besieged. The magicians once again threw fireballs at the trolls. Some of the trolls were covered with painful burns.

The man stabbed his greatsword in the gap. One troll lost its head and died. No matter how resilient, no troll could survive once their head was cut off. But there were still a lot of trolls remaining. In the end, the other melee classes came out to help the man with the greatsword. One person used a shield to clash with the trolls.

It shifted to close combat. The magicians were unable to avoid hitting their allies so they refrained from attack magic. Occasionally, they enchanted the weapons and armor of their allies.

“Kill!”

“Waaaaahhhh!”

Crockta watched the bloody battle with folded arms.

“Hoh, they are quite good *dot*.”

“Yes. But there is still a long way to go.”

“Aren’t you going to help them *dot*?”

“They are users, cursed people. They will survive.” Crockta’s chest was burning. “The trolls are being pushed. The creatures in the Black Forest fight much better.”

“They aren’t trolls but monsters!”

The momentum of both sides gradually tightened. The man with the greatsword was at the forefront of the users. He was fiercely wielding the greatsword.

Of course, Crockta’s eyes didn’t miss a thing. “There are many wasted movements.”

However, he kept watching the man. It was incredibly small compared to Ogre Slayer. However, the male user was holding a claymore, which would be classified as a greatsword.

The moment he thought the users would win... The forest started shaking.

“Kuwaaaaaah!”

It was the advent of new monsters. Desperation appeared on the users’ faces. The creatures were much bigger than the trolls that were barely pushed back. They were mutant twin head ogres changed by the magic of the forest.

“You bastard! Leave it for another time!”

“Is this on purpose?”

“Why did you lead us to this part of the forest?”

“It was confusing!”

The users started to argue. They weren't supposed to come in this deep but seemed to have become lost.

They retreated as both the trolls and the users stepped back from the ogres. When an overwhelming predator appeared, the foxes and wolves had to consider themselves.

One twin head ogre picked up a rock. It was a huge rock, but the ogre handled it like it was a pebble. It threw the rock.

Peeeeek!

A troll's head was smashed. The body of the troll collapsed after its head disappeared. The broken body tried to reproduce the flesh, but it couldn't restore something like the head. The body squirmed before stopping.

The users paled as they saw the troll falling in an instant. The ogre roared again.

“Kuwaaah!”

Then the ogres ran towards the trolls and users. They wielded their fists and clubs without discrimination. The bodies of the victims who couldn't escape flew in the air.

“Kyaaaaak!”

The ogres starting chewing on the body of a captured user, only to become more violent when the user disappeared into white particles.

“I guess we should come out.”

He wasn't worried about users who could revive again after dying, but their movements became stagnant as the fighting became more intense. He wanted to go back to Quantas quickly and enjoy the delicious food and hot water.

Crockta grabbed Ogre Slayer.

“Truly the great chieftain *dot*.”

“That's right. He should lead by example.”

He ignored Tiyo and Anor's words and moved forward. The ogres ruthlessly

slaughtered the trolls and users. Now the party's formation had completely collapsed as they scattered all over the place.

"What? Damn! An orc!"

The users discovered Crockta and stopped. Crockta ignored them.

"Uh...?" The users looked amazed as the orc ignored them. The orc was moving towards the ogres rampaging among the users. The orc's giant blade shone in the sunlight.

"Greatsword...?"

Orcs usually held axes, hammers, or halberds. Orcs using greatswords were rare. Among those rare orcs, there was one very famous warrior.

"No way... right?"

But somehow, they couldn't stop staring at him. A faint haze was boiling from his body. It felt as though he was separated from the world. It was just a simple step but the orc seemed to move in a completely different way. This orc was different.

An ogre discovered the orc and waved a club. The orc didn't avoid it. The distance between the two narrowed.

"Kuweeeeeeh!"

The ogre's club descended.

Kwaang!

Dust rose. Their eyesight was disturbed.

"Wah!"

"What?"

It was a tremendous destructive power that caused the earth to shake. They couldn't see due to the aftermath of the quaking earth. The users coughed from the dust.

Patter.

Warm liquid suddenly poured down on them. The users, who were covered in dust, moved a hand over their heads.

“Uh...?”

They looked at the liquid covering them. It was very red. Soon, the dust settled down. The users raised their heads. Then they were amazed by the sight that was revealed.

“.....!”

The twin head ogre was on the ground. Its two heads were rolling across the ground. The red liquid was from the bloody fountain that shot up when the twin head ogre’s heads were cut off. They realized that it was the ogre’s blood covering them.

“Oh my god...”

The orc, who beheaded the twin head ogre in an instant, was looking for another opponent. His greatsword was clean without any blood on it. The orc had dark tattoos covering his body. A heinous face. A red headband. Full body tattoos and the greatsword.

“No way...!” A user was shocked as he realized the identity of the orc. “That orc is...!”

The moment when the user was going to shout with joy, “.....!”

All the users around him had already fled. The only ones remaining around him were the trolls. He caught the eye of a troll.

“That...”

Before he could talk, the troll wielded its club. His vision turned upside down. His body was hanging in the air and was being shaken. It was the death he had experienced a few times in Elder Lord. The last thing he saw was the orc splitting apart an ogre.



Crockta got rid of all the ogres. In the past, he had struggled against them but now killing low-level creatures was no fun.

He looked around. “Tsk tsk.”

The users couldn’t be seen. They were either dead or ran off into the forest somewhere. Those who escaped would eventually die from the creatures in the forest. If they had maintained their formation to the end, not all of them would’ve died.

“It is just the same as before.”

It was different if they were rankers or clan members, but they were just a bunch of ordinary users. The few remaining trolls disappeared into the forest after seeing Crockta.

“You’re done, Crockta *dot*.”

Tiyo and Anor rode the caruks over. “They all ran away. They would’ve lived if they just stayed.”

“Pathetic guys, leaving without even saying thank you *dot*.”

Crockta shrugged. The users didn’t think that an orc could slay all the ogres alone. It was inevitable. In the end, all of them would be killed by the monsters and their connection terminated. After reviving, they might die several more times before managing to escape from the Forest of Creatures.

Crockta got on the caruk again. They would go straight towards Quantas after leaving the Forest of Creatures.

“Then let’s go.”

As they were about to leave, a sound was heard behind them. Crockta’s group turned. A user hesitantly walked out.

“Um...?”

It was the user with the greatsword. He looked at Crockta, Tiyo and Anor. He hesitated before asking them.

“Are you leaving the Forest of Creatures?”

Crockta nodded.

“If so, do you mind taking me with you? It is difficult for me to go alone here...”

His attitude was extremely careful. He had witnessed Crockta’s dance. A monster who had taken down several ogres alone. It was impossible for even the rankers to demonstrate such skills. This orc was surely a noble NPC, or perhaps a named one.

Crockta, Tiyo and Anor exchanged glances. Then they shrugged. Crockta nodded. “Okay.”

Thus, they were accompanied by the human warrior Kenzo. Kenzo seemed to be a user who didn’t care about things like videos or rankings. He didn’t know anything about Crockta. He just thought that Crockta was a NPC.

They headed out of the forest without talking. Perhaps due to the smell of the ogres’ blood, no creatures approached them. Sometimes they encountered parties hunting monsters in the Forest of Creatures, but they avoided any conflict due to Kenzo.

After escaping from the forest, the wide expanse of Elder Lord spread out in front of them. It was the sky of the continent.

“I’m back! Kiyahooooo!” Tiyo shouted.

Anor smiled as he saw the landscape of the continent for the first time. “Great.”

It felt full of vitality, unlike the desolate north. Crockta took a deep breath. He felt like he had come home. Then he suddenly met Kenzo’s eyes.

“Ah, you must’ve suffered. From no one, you can go safely.”

There was no danger from here onwards. Crockta smiled and patted him on the shoulder. He had met another person who used a greatsword. It gave him a sense of intimacy for some reason.

“Good luck.”

“Let’s go quickly, Crockta *dot*!”

“Are we going to Quantas? Tiyo boasted about it so much that I have to see it. It doesn’t make sense to have hot water in a house.”

“Hahat, it is nothing like the dark elf villages dot!”

The other two didn't care about Kenzo. Crockta glanced lightly at Kenzo in farewell before heading towards Quantas with his group.

“Wait a minute!” Kenzo exclaimed.

Crockta's group paused.

“.....?”

Kenzo hesitated as he stood in front of Crockta. Then he fell to his knees.

“Please accept me as your disciple!”

CHAPTER 133

MOUNTAIN OF SABRES, FOREST OF SWORDS (2)

“Phew, it is nice and warm,” Crockta muttered.

It felt like all his fatigue from his adventure in the north dispersed as he immersed himself in the hot water. This was a public bathroom in the basement of their inn. Crockta glanced elsewhere. Anor was looking around with an awed expression, amazed at the hot water that appeared like magic. When faced with the level of civilization in Quantas, he didn’t stop asking questions like a curious little boy.

“I guess Tiyo’s still playing around.”

“It’s been a while so he will be unburdening his heart.”

Tiyo had yet to return. The members of the Quantas Gnomes Garrison welcomed his return and held a big celebration. Obviously, his stories about their adventures in the north would be greatly exaggerated.

Kenzo’s voice was suddenly heard from where his body was buried in the bathtub. “It is lacking compared to natural hot springs, but this type of bath is still good. Having such a facility in an inn, Quantas is great.”

“I guess you like hot springs.”

“Of course. Where I used to live, there was a famous hot spring and the hot sulfur water was like paradise itself. There are many good elements for the body.”

Considering the place where he used to live, the white star on his forehead, and the name Kenzo, Crockta guessed that he was Japanese. He looked at Crockta and said, “But when is training...?”

“I don’t want to sweat again after bathing, so we will start tomorrow.”

“I understand.”

Crockta decided after seeing Kenzo’s swordsmanship. The two wouldn’t have a great

teacher and student relationship, but rather one where he would advise Kenzo on his skills while they stayed in Quantas.

Crockta was pleased by Kenzo's decision. If this was any game, he could become stronger just by hunting. But Elder Lord was different. Many users appreciated the importance of meeting a good teacher because enlightenment and competence could make a big difference. Kenzo felt the desire not to miss out on this opportunity.

"We have been in here for a while. Get up soon."

"Yes."

Crockta raised his body. The sound of someone humming was getting closer and Crockta wanted to leave the bath before it became noisy.

"Ohh! Everybody is here! Kahahat!"

Tiyo drunkenly staggered into the bathroom. The guests not from Crockta's group glared at the appearance of a drunkard.

"Ah, I made a noise. I'm sorry *dot*. Kyahahaha!"

Tiyo twisted and fell down. Then he raised his head and smiled again. He wasn't himself right now. Crockta exchanged glances with Anor. Someone had to take care of the drunkard. If they left him alone, he might die from placing his head under the water all night.

The two reached out at the same time.

"Hat!"

"Yap!"

Rock paper scissors! Crockta won. Anor sighed and trudged over to handle Tiyo while Crockta looked at him and laughed.

"Just like a nanny."

Anor grabbed Tiyo. Anor was in the process of raising Tiyo up when the drunken gnome suddenly jumped and plunged into the big bathtub. Water splashed

everywhere. Anor grabbed his head and forced Tiyo to apologize to the guests around them.

"I'm sorry, I'm sorry. This friend has no wisdom."

"Sorry *dot*, uhihi."

"No, what is with this attitude? Bow your head!"

There were no problems because it was Anor.

Crock and Kenzo walked out of the public bath together. Attention was focused on the fierce orc warrior Crockta and the slightly lacking, but still well-disciplined human warrior Kenzo. They stood tall and put on their clothes.

"Do you want to drink beer?"

"Okay."

After the bath, they headed up to the pub on the first floor of the inn. Several gnomes were gathered and drinking alcohol. Crockta and Kenzo sat down and ordered beer. The gnome employee brought them cold beer and dry snacks. It was a special order made to fit the size of an orc and human.

"You..." Crockta opened his mouth, making Kenzo stop as he was about to take a sip.

"Ah, yes."

"Why do you want to become stronger?" Crockta asked with a deep expression in his eyes.

It was an important question. He wanted to teach someone but he didn't want to do something wrong. That's why he recalled the best teacher that he knew. Baek Hanho's face surfaced but was quickly replaced by the great warrior Lenox. Harsh, severe, yet passionate. Because he was there, Crockta could become who he was now.

Crockta became Lenox and looked at Kenzo. Deep eyes that seemed like they could penetrate straight through him.

".....!"

Kenzo gulped.

There was common knowledge that every user in Elder Lord knew. NPCs considered this world to be real and everyone had their own philosophy. Users needed to breathe and consider this a real world; their mindset was expressed as the assimilation rate. If he answered with the flimsy mindset of a user, he might not be able to learn from this orc.

He closed his eyes and concentrated. He asked himself: 'Why do I want to become stronger?'

His previous memories passed by.

"I..."

He was a common otaku. He wasn't a hikikomori who always stayed in his room, but a friendly sales office worker caught up in the turmoil of society. He just had a secret hobby of anime appreciation and figurines collection. And the character he loved the most was...

Sword demon Matsui!

He was a character who had a bad personality, smoked cigarettes, and always had a dull expression on his face. His hobbies were Pachinko and Mahjong, and was a man who always drunkenly wandered the streets with matted hair.

However, at night, he became the city's dark knight who wielded his magical claymore against the monsters who killed his former lover. He was always cynical and committed criminal acts casually, but at crucial moments, he became the anti-hero who helped the weak.

Kenzo went to a dojo that taught swordsmanship because of him. However, he couldn't wield the sword like Matsui in reality. He plunged into the world of Elder Lord to be like Matsui. But he lacked the abilities to be a hero. The same was trying for gaining higher levels. The wall of the NPCs and creatures was high.

In Elder Lord, he was just an ordinary warrior with a sword.

Kenzo opened his mouth, "Become stronger..."

His current assimilation rate was over 60%. It was the highest it had ever been.

“I want to help people who have fallen into despair.”

It was the reason why he admired and wanted to be like Matsui. At one time, he had severe fright of human relationships. He was bullied on a daily basis at school. At that time, it was a friend who saved him.

A friend who learned karate. He knocked out the people tormenting Kenzo. Kenzo expressed his gratitude, but the friend just asked for a banana milk and handed him a book. It was Miyamoto Musashi's *The Book of Five Rings*. Then he disappeared with the words to not be pathetic. It was more shocking because he was a person who normally didn't speak a lot.

Kenzo read *The Book of Five Rings* all night. Then he started changing from that day. He tried to fix his passive attitude and to get along with the people in his surroundings. Therefore, he could take his place in society.

A single person's hand was enough to save him. If one person hadn't showed up, he would've continued to just sink. He wanted to be that one person to reach out his hand to people in despair.

“I see.” Crockta nodded. Kenzo's serious heart was conveyed.

Kenzo replied firmly again, “That's right.”

“People who have fallen into despair...” Crockta contemplated his words before faintly smiling. He beckoned, “Drink.”

Crockta drank his beer in one gulp. Kenzo supported his neck and did the same. The large glass filled with beer was gone in a flash. Both of them downed the beer in one shot.

“Kuoooh!”

“Ugh!”

It was a universal sound after drinking. The two of them shook as they felt the aftermath of the beer.

“Then go to sleep early. My approach is tough so tomorrow will be a hard day.”

They were set to stay a week in Quantas. It was enough time for Tiyo to meet his family and friends, as well as prepare for the trip. Of course, Anor also needed to see the city. Meanwhile, Crockta would preach his enlightenment to this man.

The two of them headed up to their room.



Kenzo couldn't sleep because his heart was pounding.

He needed to focus properly during this week with the orc. He had already taken some time off at his company. It was a strong desire to learn everything from this NPC, an orc who could instantly slay an ogre. Maybe he could obtain a hidden class or skill from this.

He moved his gaze. Crockta wasn't sleeping yet.

“.....?”

He was sitting on the bed with his eyes closed. The faint moonlight leaking through the window showing his serenity.

“.....!”

At that moment, he felt the same energy as when the ogre was slain. A hazy atmosphere appeared around Crockta's body. It was like he was separated from the world. His flesh became distant and he seemed to disappear from Kenzo's perspective. There was an invisible aura moving through the air. It was calm and silent, but Kenzo's muscles shook like he was on the battlefield.

It was a strange phenomenon. Kenzo kept lying down as he forgot the time. Some time passed.

Crockta opened his mouth. “When you reach this level, you can practice without even breaking a sweat.”

“.....!”

He was aware of the fact that Kenzo was watching.

“Keep in mind that in this world, the will of an individual can make a big difference.”

It was something Crockta had learned directly.

In reality, no matter how much he trained his will, he couldn't jump a few meters or break a rock. Even if he practiced for a lifetime, he might be able to kill a wild animal with his bare hands. Limits existed.

But this was the world of Elder Lord. A person could grow infinitely if they trained and had a strong will. A place where the possibilities of individuals were expanded beyond infinity, that was Elder Lord. Crockta realized this from Hoyt, then he reached a higher ground due to Gushantimur.

Now it was possible to simulate a fight with a virtual enemy by raising his will and imagining it. The realm of a Hero beyond the Pinnacle. Crockta knew this very well, so he planned to help Kenzo experience the realm of the Pinnacle in this week.

Seeing was believing.

“Sleep. Tomorrow, you will regret not sleeping earlier.”

“Ah, I understand.”

Kenzo hurriedly closed his eyes. Maybe he would experience something life-changing tomorrow. Elder Lord was a symbol of this era. Even if he wasn't a ranker, there were many users who earned a big profit through Elder Lord. It usually depended on how strong a person was and their level.

Through this opportunity, he could hopefully become a professional user who earned a living through Elder Lord. It was the dream of all Elder Lord users.

He couldn't wait for tomorrow's training. He didn't worry much. No matter how harsh the training was, it wouldn't kill him.

But...

It actually happened.

CHAPTER 134

MOUNTAIN OF SABRES, FOREST OF SWORDS (3)

[You are experiencing the ‘aftermath of death.’ You are helpless. All abilities have suddenly decreased.]

“I’m sorry.”

Crockta said, not looking very apologetic. They were standing in a vacant lot.

“I didn’t know you would be that weak.” The orc shrugged, looking like a demon. “I’m really glad that you are cursed by the stars. Kulkulkulkul!”

“.....”

Kenzo had just died.

After he died and the connection was terminated, he had stared at the capsule before quickly rushing to re-connect. During the spar, he had been unable to escape Ogre Slayer flying towards his abdomen and the huge sword had gone through his abdomen. He had stared with disbelief at the blood before slowly collapsing.

“...It seems so,” Kenzo replied, but he hadn’t forgotten Crockta’s expression as he turned into white particles.

‘Ah, I made a mistake.’ It was such an expression.

Kenzo had never mentioned that he was a being cursed by the stars to Crockta. In other words, Crockta didn’t know that Kenzo would survive his death. Nevertheless, Crockta had attacked to kill and there was only a faint response to Kenzo’s death.

“So will you continue?”

Did he have to continue this training? Had he made a mistake? Were orcs rougher and more heinous than he thought? Crockta seemed respectful to other people despite his

appearance, but he changed in battle. There were often images of berserk orcs fighting regardless of their own well-being. So, orcs might not care about dying during training. Rather, they might consider it an honor to die like that.

Kenzo's face turned pale. "For the next week, don't kill me..."

"I can't control that."

Crockta started swinging his greatsword again as Kenzo retreated one step. Crockta's swordsmanship was impressive and Kenzo couldn't predict the trajectory of the greatsword. Furthermore, it was impossible to follow along with Crockta's speed and strength.

He wouldn't have thought it was possible if he hadn't seen it himself.

"Anyway, this is what training is. Kulkukul. I can swing freely now that I don't have to worry about you dying."

"That's not it... hiik!"

Kenzo twisted his body and avoided the greatsword. There was a burning mark on his cheek. Crockta was laughing like a demon as he asked, "Have you slowed down?"

"Our abilities, for some time after dying... uwah! They are reduced!"

"I see. That is even better." Crockta attacked again and Kenzo stepped back. "Don't rely on your power and speed; fight with your heart."

Kenzo tried to swing his claymore to block an attack but he felt the power and avoided it instead. As he continued to back away, Crockta stopped.

"Don't you want to become stronger?"

"I want to become stronger. But..."

"But?"

"The level difference seems too high. Those who are cursed can't come back forever. I might really die. If you could use some control..."

This was an exaggeration. He would keep surviving. Continue. But it wasn't completely a lie. He would still live, but the lethargy of death would continue to overlap, his stats would be very low and the after effects could last for months or even years.

It was the penalty that users were most afraid of.

Crockta grinned. "Isn't that better?"

"Y-Yes?"

"Do it desperately Kenzo." Crockta stepped forward. Kenzo retreated. "Look at me clearly in the face of death."

Crockta pointed at himself.

"If you want to become stronger, look at me clearly. With your two eyes."

Crockta's atmosphere changed. It was like when he was meditating last night. It felt like the time of the world was flowing differently with him. No, it seemed as though he was adjusting the time of the world.

Kenzo felt himself become slow and stagnant, while the world was accelerating. It was hard to follow the flow of time just facing Crockta.

The sunlight shone on the vacant lot. Sweat flowed down. His eyelids shook. A flash. His eyelids moved the moment he sensed it. Ogre Slayer was approaching him. Kenzo freaked out as there was no time to think. His body responded immediately as he wielded his claymore, the two weapons colliding.

Kaaaang!

"Fight me while thinking you will really die," Crockta declared as their swords struck each other.

He smiled and kicked Kenzo, who was rolling across the ground in pain.

"Do what you said, do it with the idea that death is really the end."

Crockta thought it was the biggest limitation about the users. They would revive if they died. To them, this world wasn't real. Therefore, the rate of assimilation was low

and such an attitude led to uncertainties about themselves. It was just like how the boxer had to see the fist that was flying. They had to look straight at this world.

“I understand.” Kenzo’s face became determined and his heart had hardened.

“That look is good! Again!”

Crockta wielded his greatsword. Kenzo took a posture to stand up against Crockta. It wasn’t just for evasion, but to occasionally wield the sword in a counterattack.

“Open your mouth! Bul’tarrrr!”

Crockta jumped and aimed the greatsword towards Kenzo. Since Kenzo became serious, Crockta also started to control his power.

Kenzo barely blocked the blow with his claymore. Then he responded by aiming towards Crockta’s abdomen.

He rushed in and shouted, “Bul’tarrrr!”



Tiyo was showing Anor around Quantas.

“The continent is really incredible...”

“It isn’t just the continent, but Quantas that is great *dot*. Kahahat.”

Anor was already amazed by the bathing facilities in Quantas, and now he couldn’t keep his eyes off the performances on the streets. It was a place rich in culture, from singers and musicians to gnomes putting on a puppet show.

“Good *dot*. I’m going to show you a great time at the Opera *dot*!”

“Opera?”

“Theatre, music, art, literature, it can be called the crystallization of the art *dot*.”

“I don’t know what to expect, but I am looking forward to it.”

“It will be a show *dot*.”

Tiyo led Anor to the ‘Street of Arts’ in Quantas. There were gnome musicians performing on the street, art stores selling artworks and citizens wandering the area in peculiar clothes, giving the area a quaint atmosphere. There was a large building in the center. The ‘Opera Stadium’, this was the best venue that all artists in Quantas dreamed about.

“This work is... The Bird That Drinks Tears.”

“The Bird That Drinks Tears?”

“That’s right *dot*.”

Tiyo said with an excited expression.

“It is a classic masterpiece... the story of the bird who is the most beautiful singer among four birds.” (Based on a book by one of the best fantasy authors in Korea.)

“At best, isn’t it just a story? No matter how it is performed, wouldn’t reading the story be better? I don’t expect much...”

“Shut up *dot*!”

Tiyo dragged Anor to the ticket office. The show was about to begin. Then Tiyo made a difficult expression.

“Uh. I didn’t bring enough money *dot*.”

“Then don’t overdo it.”

“Hey Anor, did you bring any money *dot*?”

“This is the first time I’ve been on the continent, so where will I get money? Let’s just go next time.”

“Shut up *dot*! I want to see this today! With my own eyes!” Tiyo shouted. “I! Want to see *dot*!”

“You don’t have money, so what will you see?”

“Shut up, you hillbilly *dot*! You’ve never seen the opera...! Whoops.”

“Hillbilly? You little fu... oof!”

“C-Calm down *dot*.”

The ticket employee watched them and spoke up. “Guests. You have the money but you aren’t carrying it on you, is that correct?”

The employee was a gnome. Tiyo nodded at his interruption.

“Indeed *dot*. I am Tiyo. Do you know me? If you don’t know me in Quantas then you are a spy *dot*!”

“I just recently came to this city... hahahat. By the way, perhaps I can help you?”

“Help?”

“Yes.” He pointed to the side. “If you go to that alley...”

“If I go?”

“There are some friends who will give money to customers like you. You clearly have the money but am in a temporary liquidity crisis. Isn’t this a very unfair situation?”

“Definitely *dot*!”

“Then you can borrow the money right now and pay it back later.”

“Ohh, I see. Wait for me *dot*! Let’s go Anor!”

“Hahat. I’ll be waiting.”

Tiyo turned around. Anor caught up to him. “Wait a minute. This is completely...”

“Completely?”

“A loan...”

“I have money *dot*! Tomorrow I will come back and pay it off straight away *dot*!”

“Still, it is a little questionable...”

“Follow me *dot*!”

Tiyo insisted so they entered the alley behind the Opera Stadium. There were one gnome and two humans smoking. As soon as Tiyo and Anor appeared, the smokers greeted them with a smile.

“Hello!”

“Hello! Did you receive an introduction?”

“That’s right *dot*.”

“We are the ‘Run on Money’ business that works using a credit system. Hahaha. Trust and faith is our slogan. How much do you need?”

Anor was reluctant when he heard the word ‘credit’ emerge from the mouth of smokers in an alley, but Tiyo didn’t care.

“Just enough to see the opera *dot*.”

“Haha. That much is nothing.”

They held out a contract.

Tiyo examined it and saw that there was nothing special. There was no additional money if it was paid back quickly, but it was the typical vicious system where the interest rate rose sharply as repayment was delayed.

Of course, Tiyo didn’t care since he would pay it back tomorrow.

“This is plain. All moneylenders are the same *dot*. I’ll sign the contract.”

“Huhuhu. You are bold. I understand.”

The agreement was rapidly made. As Tiyo filled out his address, a man ran somewhere and came back. Tiyo’s address had been confirmed. They nodded.

Anor whispered. “Isn’t it suspicious that they checked your house?”

“There is no one in Quantas who doesn’t know my house *dot*. Don’t worry.”

So they borrowed money.

“Thank you for your consideration! I love you!” The men bowed their heads and shouted loudly. Tiyo laughed with satisfaction.

“They really love their work and the customers *dot*. Kahahat!”

“.....”



“No, wow. That, wow...”

“That is enough *dot*.”

“Perfect, a new world, a masterpiece of God, ahh...”

Anor had completely fallen in love after watching the opera. The magnificent orchestra, the beautiful songs, the story filled with conflicts and emotions and the gorgeous voice of the singers expressing it. It was something he could never imagine in the world. At the end of every scene, the gnome audience dressed in fine clothing would clap. It felt like the world of the aristocracy.

“Let’s watch it again tomorrow! Crockta as well!”

“Expensive *dot*!”

“Didn’t you easily borrow money?”

“The opera isn’t something to be enjoyed on a daily basis *dot*.”

“Kulkulkul, I have money so let’s go next time,” Crockta said.

Crockta had quite a lot of money. Anor jumped with delight. Kenzo, who was listening to the conversation, felt like he was dying.

“Kenzo, you are shaky.”

“I’m not!”

“Am I heavy?”

“A little... that... a short break...”

“Is it hard? Nobody cares! The enemy on the battlefield won’t care if you are tired! Get rid of your weaknesses!”

“Yes, yep!”

“Your waist!”

“Yep!”

Crockta was sitting on top of the prone Kenzo. “It isn’t just about strengthening your body. Fix your mindset!”

“Understood!”

“Push!”

“A... Aaaaah!”

Kenzo bent his arms and slowly raised himself. His arms trembled.

“Wonderful.”

Users who thought of Elder Lord as a game didn’t want to endure pain. It was just like the traitor Grom, who easily gave up being an orc for the pleasurable path. Crockta thought it was the most important difference between him and ordinary users. Elder Lord was like another life to him. For the sake of the sweet fruit, one had to experience the bitterness. Crockta was going to fix Kenzo’s mindset.

“By the way... that...” Kenzo opened his mouth

“Um, what?”

“Tiyo... uhh... did he borrow money...?”

Crockta glanced at Tiyo. Tiyo and Anor were already leaving for somewhere else. “I guess he did. Why?”

“That... no...”Kenzo frowned. “Like me... among those who have been cursed... there are those who abuse such knowledge... I’m not worried about Tiyo or Crockta, but the other people...”

With the message about the opening of the north and the disappearance of the behemoth, the Forest of Creatures was popular among the high-level users as a new hunting ground. The city closest to the Forest of Creatures was Quantas.

Thus, there was an influx of users. With so many users gathering in Quantas, it was natural for there to be some bad people aiming to take advantage of the NPCs. There were those who imitated the real life methods of moneylenders.

Of course, they wouldn’t mess with a fearsome NPC like Crockta.

“Hoh...”

Crockta nodded.

CHAPTER 135

MOUNTAIN OF SABRES, FOREST OF SWORDS (4)

The people from 'Run on Money' weren't there when Tiyo returned to the alley behind Opera Stadium the next day.

"What *dot*?"

He had come with the money to pay them back.

"Where did everyone go *dot*...?"

He frowned. He was going to quickly finish the contract, but the people had disappeared. If this happened, he wouldn't take a step back.

He asked a ticket employee at the Opera Stadium. "Where are the people who were lending money here?"

The employee looked at Tito and shrugged. "I'm not sure. They are always wandering around somewhere. I'm not that familiar with you."

"I thought you knew them *dot*?"

"I don't know. I just told people who needed money about them."

"Do you know the place where they usually hang out *dot*?"

"I don't know."

Tiyo was troubled and tried to take the questioning further, but other guests showed up for their tickets, forcing him to take a step back.

"Umm..." Tiyo was confused. "Well, I suppose it doesn't really matter."

It wasn't his fault they weren't in the spot. Tiyo left without paying back the loan. He would give them the money the next day.

There are still a lot of work left to do in Quantas. This time, he was planning to take

Anor to Quantes Academy. The professors would love it if he told them about the life and history of the north, together with Anor.

The north would soon be opened, so if they shared a lot of information, Quantes could cope better. He was from the Quantes Gnomes Garrison. He was a soldier who always worried about Quantes' future.

He called out to Anor, who was watching the street performances. The tall dark elf with brown skin stood out among the gnomes. He was engrossed in a puppet show.

"Anor, let's go *dot*."

"Did you pay back the money?"

"I didn't see them *dot*. Where did they go...?"

"So you still owe them?"

"How can I pay it back if no one is there?"

"Um..."Anor frowned and started to ponder something. "In other words, if you can't pay it today, the interest rate will increase."

"That is ridiculous *dot*. I tried to pay them back, but they weren't there!"

"Tiyo is naive."Anor laughed. "Living in a good city like this, you've always seen good things and lived with good treatment... huhut."

"What are you talking about? I have lived through hardship and adversity *dot*!"

"That is different. I know a lot of the tricks since I was harassed. It was a method that strong people use against the weak. A method to extort others using force."

"Indeed, you are the outcast of Nuridot."

Anor huffed at Tiyo's remark, but he remained silent. He had come a long way. He had the self-control to not swear.

"Huhu, it is true but it is annoying to hear."

“Ohh... your self-control has increased *dot*.”

Anor shrugged. “In any case, you should be careful of those strange moneylenders. You say you can repay it, but if you don’t, they might end up bothering your friends and family later.”

“Can they really bother my friends *dot*?”

“They don’t know about Tiyo.”

“I got it *dot*.”

Tiyo wasn’t very concerned. He was a captain of the highly respected Gnomes Garrison and a macho man, so he didn’t think anyone in Quantas could harm him.

They headed for the Academy.

“That reminds me, I got involved with Crockta at the Academy *dot*.”

“Did you meet there?”

“Indeed *dot*. There was a rough incident due to the belt that Crockta is currently wearing at his waist.”

The Academy erected a monument for those who died because of the devastation caused by the Demon’s Mouth.

“So I met him and headed north, now we are heading to the south together. Life is truly unpredictable *dot*.”

“That’s right. I thought I would spend my whole life in Nuridot.”

Crockta changed numerous things. They looked forward to how the future would change.



Kenzo raised his head.

Crockta’s Ogre Slayer flew.

At that moment, Kenzo had the foreboding feeling that he would die again. It was a speed that couldn't be avoided. He couldn't avoid the big sword even if he twisted his body. He would die again. Kenzo released the power in his body. Then he stared blankly at the sword aiming for him.

Somehow, time slowed down. He could clearly see the shape of the blade flying towards him. It was a well-made sword. He could see everything from the blade that shone in the midday sun, as well as Crockta's eyes staring at him.

What was happening?

He moved his body. It felt like his body escaped from under Crockta's blade. He could feel it slipping away from the trajectory of the greatsword. Maybe he would be able to counterattack. He twisted and wielded his claymore. It felt like the claymore would cross the gap made by Ogre Slayer and hit Crockta.

Peeok!

"Ouch!"

He thought so, but Crockta's Ogre Slayer had moved again and struck him. He fell.

"Heok, heok."

"You are developing. Good." Crockta grinned. "I have to leave soon. I hope you can quickly enter the realm that I told you about earlier."

"The area called the Pinnacle."

"That's right."

Kenzo didn't say it but he already knew about the Pinnacle rating. It was basic knowledge that most users had already figured out. But he didn't know how to reach such a profound state. If he looked at his skills, they were at the Essence and Rare rank, both below the Pinnacle.

"Kenzo."

"Yes."

“Don’t forget. Once you reach the Pinnacle, you have to listen to my words.”

“I understand.”

Crockta had one condition. After becoming strong enough to reach the Pinnacle, he had to listen to one thing that Crockta said. Of course, that was on the premise that it was possible for Kenzo. As long as it was possible, he would listen to Crockta’s will.

Kenzo gladly accepted. After training with Crockta, he was able to get a glimpse of the realm of the Pinnacle. By the time he reached that realm, he was confident that he would become a ranker. If so, this price wasn’t too much to pay.

“Anything. I will surely do it.”

“Good.” Crockta nodded.

The moment he was about to raise his sword again, “Hey! Crockta!”

Tiyo’s voice was heard. Crockta and Kenzo turned their heads at the same time, with the latter’s eyes wiggled. Crockta and Kenzo were in a vacant lot on the outskirts of Quantas so Tiyo was the one giving Anor the tour. And Tiyo had done his job properly.

“Look *dot*! This guy!”

“Who is this young man? Perhaps...”

“Indeed *dot*! This guy!”

A handsome young man stood in front of them.

“It is that timid cursing fool *dot*!”

Anor’s bushy hair was now neatly arranged with his black hair neatly covering his forehead. The two clear eyes beneath them were shining brightly. In addition, he wasn’t wearing his shabby clothing from the north, but had changed into the continent’s clothing that combined practicality and fashion.

Indeed. The species of beauty, an elf descendant! If this was reality, he would easily be able to become a celebrity.

“There is a saying that clothes are wings. Now, the last point *dot!*”

Tiyo threw something towards Anor. Anor grabbed it and placed it on his body.

“.....!”

It was a gray robe that didn’t look much different from his previous one. The previous handsome appearance of the dark elf had disappeared, leaving a dark necromancer whose face couldn’t be seen properly.

“How is it, not bad *dot!*”

“Ohuhuhu...”

Anor’s laughter emerged from the shadow of the hood.

“Kukukuk... I am the necromancer Anor...!”

“My fashion sense saved Anor *dot.*”

“I was suspicious when you bought strange clothes but... this robe is spectacular. Kukuk...”

“I am also a trend setter. Tiyo sets the fashion in Quantas. Hihihit.”

Crockta wanted to say that it wasn’t the case. “That... just take off the robe...”

They just sniffed.

“Crockta is ignorant about fashion.”

“Ignore Crockta *dot.*”

What should he do with this dark elf and gnome duo? Crockta sighed. Still, Kenzo who had the fashion sense of a modern man, whispered in a small voice, +”People with strange fashion senses always think it is great. Please understand.”

“.....!”

How long had it been since he experienced common sense? Crockta looked at Kenzo.

Kenzo smiled and raised his thumb. Crockta nodded and placed an arm around Kenzo's shoulder.

"You are truly a man who can learn from me."

"Huhuhu, no."

He was a Japanese person also interested in fashion. The fashion style in Japan wasn't always popular either.

Once the situation was cleared up, they decided to have a meal together. They planned to eat at a famous restaurant in Quantas in order to give Anor a taste of the delicious dishes of the continent. They headed to the well-known restaurant 'Quantas' Healthy Kitchen', located in Quantas Square. It was famous for its charismatic chef.

By the way, Anor discovered something strange near the restaurant.

"I didn't know the price would go up so suddenly..."

"It is okay. We are happy to help."

"I just need to pay you back?"

"Of course. Hahahahat."

He saw a group of humans and gnomes. It was the same as before, but the humans were watching from behind.

"The interest rate will be high, but it won't be a problem if you pay it back quickly. Hahahat."

"Thank you. I don't want to be yelled at by my new girlfriend."

"I am rooting for your love."

Anor looked at them closely.

It was obvious based on the contents of the conversation. Unscrupulous moneylenders had started setting up root in Quantas. It wasn't noticeable now, but they would eventually become a huge problem to Quantas.

“What are you doing *dot*? Quickly!” Tiyo called out to him.

“I’m coming.”

Anor forgot about telling Tiyo as he entered the restaurant. The doors opened to reveal light from a beautiful chandelier. Below the chandelier were delicious dishes that stimulated his appetite. It was enough to make him forget what he just saw.

“Whoa!”

Anor entered the restaurant.



“I have to admit it.” Anor wiped his mouth with a towel and said, “The culture of the continent is awesome.”

He had already eaten several honey pork dishes. His stomach seemed too big for his slim body. He reached out for another dish, despite the feeling that came from overeating.

“In particular, the food is great.”

“I think you ate too much.”

“It’s okay. I’m okay.”

This time, Anor reached out for a chicken-stuffed-with-vegetables dish. Crockta, Tiyo, and Anor were already unable to eat anymore. Anor struggled and swallowed his grape juice.

“That reminds me, I saw them again.”

“Saw what *dot*?”

“The group of moneylenders. They were near the restaurant.”

The expressions of the three people changed at Anor’s words. Tiyo and Kenzo both looked suspicious. Meanwhile, Crockta grinned with interest.

“Good.”

“What are you saying *dot*?”

“I’ve found you a suitable opponent.” Crockta looked at Kenzo and said, “Kenzo.”

“Yes.”

“The next training is a real life experience.” Crockta pointed at Kenzo’s claymore. “With that Claymore, let them know the justice of Quantas.”

“Huh?”

Kenzo’s eyes widened.

Those moneylenders, they were users. He had to fight a bunch of users for an NPC.

CHAPTER 136

MOUNTAIN OF SABRES, FOREST OF SWORDS (5)

“.....”

Kenzo grabbed his head.

“.....!”

He slammed his head into the table. The nearby gnomes looked up at his behavior.

“Hey, young man.” A large, muscular gnome approached. Contrary to his manly body, his face showed the traces of time. “I don’t know what it is, but it seems like you are worried about something.”

He placed a big beer glass in front of Kenzo. It seemed bigger in comparison to the average gnome’s size. In the hands of the muscular gnome, the beer looked even bigger.

“I’ll buy you a glass.”

“...Thank you.”

This was Quantas Bar. It was located near the inns, but it was a place where men drank forlornly under the dim lighting. They both drank the beer at the same time.

“Yes, what is worrying you? Is it okay if I listen once?”

Kenzo looked at the man, studying his wrinkled face and his deep eyes. He looked like a senior in his past life.

There was a strange mood.

In reality, he had no such experiences. At most, there were salary men who got drunk and old men whispering about the past. They didn’t care of other drunk people. It was a bleak period where people became suspicious of any young person who entered a bar.

But because he watched a lot of dramas and movies, Kenzo felt like he could get something from this man. In movies, weren't there always advisers who gave answers when protagonists lost their way? This gnome's appearance seemed to suggest that.

"My problem..." Kenzo opened his mouth. It was just an artificial intelligence anyway. He could confess his problem without any hesitation. "I am learning under someone right now. He asked me to do one thing, but I will be in a difficult position if I do it. So, should I do this or not...?"

Kenzo was troubled.

They might be moneylenders, but they were still users. It was their play style to attack NPCs. They didn't consider it a crime to act against NPCs. If Kenzo attacked them, he could be stigmatized as someone who attacked fellow users.

That was the source of his troubles.

"I don't know the details, but you seem to be in a rough spot."

"That's right."

The gnome touched his chin and ordered something from the bartender.

"Bartender. Please do what I asked before."

"I understand."

The bartender approached with something. The gnome laughed and shook the contents of the bottle.

"This is Mukarasanebo."

"Mukarasanebo..."

It was a very precious wine in Elder Lord.

"Yes. Did your teacher make you do that while knowing your position is difficult?"

"That's not it. He doesn't know about my position." He couldn't explain to Crockta about the relationship between users.

“He doesn’t know?”

“Yes. He won’t understand.”

“I see. Huhuhu.”

The man laughed and poured Mukarasanebo into their cups. Kenzo quietly stared without drinking.

“This precious thing...”

“It’s okay. Drink.”

“Thank you.”

Kenzo and the gnome drank the Mukarasanebo. He could feel the unique aroma and taste; it was indeed worthy to be a product called the nobility of wine.

“Do you know why your teacher did it?”

“Well, that...”

Crockta hadn’t mentioned why he wanted Kenzo to get rid of the moneylenders. Maybe it was to get rid of the bad guys harming the city or there was a hidden element that Kenzo didn’t know.

The gnome laughed. “You don’t know anything about each other.”

“.....”

“Then is your mentor a trustworthy person?”

Kenzo thought about it. Was Crockta trustworthy? He didn’t know much about Crockta. Unlike the image of his species, he was very gentlemanly until he turned into an unmatched warrior in battle. But Crockta had saved him from the creatures in the forest. When Kenzo asked to be taught and said that it was to help people, he nodded with a satisfied expression. It was a short time, but Kenzo could feel what he was like as a person.

Kenzo nodded. “Yes. He is.”

The gnome smiled and said, "Then trust him."

"Huh?"

"I could tell the answer just by looking at your face." The gnome shook the Mukarasanebo. There wasn't much left. He gave Kenzo the last cup. "It is a precious drink but you can have the last cup."

Kenzo looked at the cup and shook his head.

The gnome said, "I'll tell you my story. I have lived my whole life in Quantas, but I am leaving today."

"Today?"

"As you can see from the Mukarasanebo, I had a lot of money. I was a successful businessman, but thanks to a little mistake, I've lost everything. All I have now is my body, so I am going to another city to work."

The gnome's expression was so serene that Kenzo couldn't imagine such a story. The gnome continued speaking, "It is because of a loan."

".....!"

Kenzo's eyes widened.

"A friend who was my most reliable adviser told me not to trust them, but I believed I could control everything. They used a crafty method to cause me to pay a tremendous amount of money. I shouldn't have believed in the foreigners who suddenly appeared..."

He laughed bitterly, "I lost everything."

Kenzo couldn't say anything. The weight of his life felt like it was pushing down on his shoulders.

"Somehow, I feel like I caused your mood to become worse."

"Ah, no."

“Either way, everything is your choice. But if someone you trust is giving you advice, you should listen.”

The gnome rose from his spot. Kenzo tried to catch him, but the gnome had already stepped back. “I was lonely but I’m glad I got to meet you at the end. This is the last of the Mukarasanebo, the last cup. Please enjoy it slowly.”

He handed money over to the bartender. They briefly exchanged glances. The gnome must have a long relationship with the bartender here.

“Be well.”

“You too.”

The gnome left the bar, walking in a regal manner under the moonlight.

Kenzo looked at the clear liquid in the cup. Mukarasanebo, the wine that was called nobility due to its flavor. He raised the last cup to his mouth.

It was bitter.



Kenzo moved through the darkness. It wasn’t difficult to find the users in Quantas. He tracked those who showed suspicious tendencies. They were careful, but he had imitated a ninja and learned tracking and stealth skills.

In the process, he learned how they tightened the noose. They lent money to people. They used tricks to increase the interest rates, harassing those who couldn’t pay it off. By the way, a lot of gnomes were deceived. The inhabitants of Elder Lord were familiar with these tricky methods, so they had no choice but to believe.

In addition, there were users who bribed the officials of Quantas. The gnomes who appealed to the officials were dismissed.

The gnome who gave Kenzo the Mukarasanebo had also been hit like this. The users were reproducing the scams of reality in the game.

“Why aren’t you giving me the money?”

“Money, I don’t have it. I just borrowed 100 silver but the interest rate...”

“It is written! Didn’t you see the contract?”

“I tried to pay it back but you weren’t there...”

“Then try to find us! It can’t just be given to you! Do whatever it takes! Am I wrong? You should be familiar with all the people here.” They were no different from the gangsters, or Yakuza, in reality. “If you don’t have the money, there is this. Your house. Sell your house. Then all the money will be paid back. Eh?”

“This house has been in my family for generations...”

“Then give us the money!”

“Hiik!”

There was a disturbance as the furniture in the house started to be smashed.

“P-Please stop!”

“The money?”

“.....”

“Nothing?”

“The rate is too... we no longer...”

“Then get out of this house! Foreclosure!”

Users armed with weapons and armor entered the house and threatened the gnomes. The guards of Quantas arrived after being informed of the turmoil. The users immediately changed their attitude, showing their papers and letters.

“Ah! You worked hard! We’re a little noisy, so we’re sorry. Do you see these papers here? We are doing legitimate work. Don’t worry.”

The guards faced the users and saw that there were no problems with the documentation. They looked at each other and nodded. “Please be careful of making a

lot of noise. A report was received.”

“Ah. I’m sorry. Hahaha.”

“Then.”

After the guards left, it was a repetition of the previous situation.

“Typical NPCs. Kukuk. Hey guys, shake this house. What is going to happen?”

“Brother. Is this little one yours?”

It happened when they tried to touch the family of the victim.

Kenzo felt something inside him break. A memory from his past. Whenever he was bullied, he could endure anything about himself; however, he couldn’t stand any insults to his family. However, he didn’t have the power to resist. The wounds from that period time still hadn’t healed, and felt like it had festered over with gangrene.

It was why he wanted to become like a hero in cartoons and help people.

‘Don’t be stupid.’

Kenzo revealed his body and entered the house. The people inside were bewildered at the emergence of another user and called out, “Who is it?”

Kenzo replied with his sword instead of words. He was a high-level user, and in recent days, he had gone through Pinnacle training with Crockta. The overall level of the users had increased a lot, but he could nonetheless slaughter these types of people.

His claymore slashed at the users. They turned into white particles in an instant. The only gnome NPC working with the moneylenders was trembling. Kenzo grabbed his collar and demanded.

“If you don’t want to die, tell me where all the people in your organization are.”

The gnome started thinking. Kenzo swung his greatsword. A few pieces of hair from the gnome fell down. If it was a little more angled, the gnome would’ve died instantly. The gnome shook.

“This is your last chance. One. Two...”

The gnome came clean before he finished speaking. He told Kenzo all the important points, including the number of people in their group and the position of the leader. Kenzo gained the information and brandished his sword. The gnome’s head was hit and he fainted.

The night wasn’t over yet. Kenzo began to move. The moneylenders were spread all over the place, but their core force was together. Kenzo dealt with the remnants. He repeated this work until it was daytime.

As the users got in contact with each other, he soon became surrounded by a lot of them.

Strong. A few were on a level similar to Kenzo. This made it more annoying. The level of the users was good enough not to bother anyone this way. Nevertheless, they gave out loans and bullied anyone who couldn’t pay.

It didn’t matter that they were committing evil against NPCs. Just... he remembered the deep eyes of the gnome who bought him the Mukarasanebo. There was also the face of the child who looked up at the users surrounding him with fear. The family begging for the child not to become hurt. The mother’s tears as she embraced her children.

All of this meant he couldn’t hold back his irritation. He couldn’t bear these feelings and wielded his blade.

“You are a user like us. What are you trying to do?” They asked him.

Kenzo ignored them and rushed in. It was an unfavorable fight. There wasn’t much difference in level and they outnumbered him. Maybe some of them were superior to Kenzo. He was alone.

However, it didn’t feel like that. He grasped his claymore and recalled the time with Crockta. Swords were flying towards him. There were many of them. A fast speed. He shouldn’t have been able to avoid them.

However, Kenzo didn’t die.

[Your assimilation rate has risen.]

[Your assimilation rate has risen.]

[Your assimilation rate has risen.]

[Your assimilation rate has risen...]

Unity with the world. The world of Elder Lord was pushing at his back.

Kenzo gripped his claymore and plunged into the encirclement.

Then.

The world slowed.

CHAPTER 137

MOUNTAIN OF SABRES, FOREST OF SWORDS (6)

Crockta looked up at the night sky. It was the eve of the full moon. It had been several days since he first gave Kenzo the mission.

Tiyo and Anor had finished their sightseeing tour of Quantas and all the preparations were finished. They were leaving Quantas tomorrow. After leaving Quantas and Maillard, they were thinking of going to the southern part of the continent where Tiyo's father was. It was also the place where the Heaven and Earth Clan was based, and they were one of Crockta's targets.

He heard that the Heaven and Earth Clan might be related to his enemy, the Thawing Balhae Clan. Therefore, they would decide on their next move after purchasing information from Maillard's Information Guild.

Apart from that, he also didn't like the person called Choi Hansung. Someone needed to put a stop to the war he perpetrated. If he refused, Choi Hansung would get to see Crockta's Ogre Slayer.

As he thought about the future, he noticed something moving in the darkness. Crockta turned his head and said, "You came."

It was Kenzo.

Crockta grinned. Kenzo's appearance made it obvious as to what he had done. Kenzo was covered in blood. That wasn't all. Crockta could feel something in him that wasn't there before.

"You have reached the Pinnacle."

Kenzo's atmosphere was different now. Now that he reached the early realm of the Pinnacle, he couldn't be compared to other high-level users. The realm of the Pinnacle was for those who realized the true value of Elder Lord. It was a rating that only a few of the strongest, often called rankers, reached.

"Yes, I've reached the Pinnacle."

Kenzo's voice was tired. He attacked the moneylenders infecting Quantas day and night. He didn't bother with tools. He killed them when they were alive, then again when they reconnected. He continued to kill.

Due to Kenzo's persistent pursuit, the users eventually gave up and withdrew from Quantas. Kenzo lunged a sword in their leaving backs to stop them from ever considering coming back to Quantas.

"That wasn't the only realization."

His emotions had been shaken as he watched the NPCs being persecuted, causing his assimilation rate to rise sharply. Only then was he able to reach the Pinnacle. At the same time, he realized something else.

He made a decision: if a wicked person ever appeared in front of him, regardless of whether they were an NPC or a user, he would raise his sword.

That...

They were people.

Crockta smiled. When Kenzo first said he wanted to help others, Crockta smelled something from him. Kenzo had fulfilled Crockta's expectations. Now he would do what he believed.

Crockta asked, "Yes, did I help you?"

Kenzo bowed his head and replied, "Yes. It is thanks to Crockta."

"Then listen to my condition."

"Of course."

If he reached this ground, he was supposed to listen to what Crockta wanted. Kenzo was nervous. He didn't know what the condition would be. Crockta said it would be within a capable range, but it was still ambiguous. Maybe he would be faced with a difficult request. However, he also believed in Crockta.

"My request is simple."

Crockta moved Ogre Slayer. Kenzo also glanced at his claymore. What did he want to do?

Crockta slowly moved his greatsword. It was slow. It wasn't the realm of the Pinnacle, but there was no shaking. Crockta's blade moved on a gentle curve. Kenzo watched from a distance.

He didn't move. At that moment. The blade touched his neck.

".....!"

It was impossible. It was minor, but Kenzo got goose bumps as he realized the meaning. It was an attack beyond the level of speed. An area that he couldn't reach. It was the realm of miracles.

"This..."

"The next stage after the Pinnacle."

".....!"

"It means that the Pinnacle isn't the end."

After reaching the realm of the Pinnacle, he knew that there was 'something more.' But this couldn't even be called that. The word 'impossible' was all he could think.

"Now I will tell you what I want."

It wasn't the end. Kenzo once again shook after hearing Crockta's next words.

"Do some good with that strength."

It was an unimaginable demand. Kenzo realized that Crockta was a much bigger man than he thought. Kenzo nodded. It felt like Crockta's eyes were penetrating inside him. Did Crockta know that Kenzo would stand in front of him with this mindset after taking care of the moneylenders?

Kenzo bowed his head. He could only say one thing, "I understand."

For him, Crockta wasn't simply a person in the game. He was someone with a great

spirit.

Kenzo said, "I will pass your teachings onto other people. The realm of the Pinnacle, and what to use it for. Will you also let them know it?"

"Of course."

Kenzo would gather people. There were a variety of ways to play the game. There would be those who harassed NPCs for profit. That was the way they played. Therefore, they needed to take care of such villains. They would be good for NPCs and bad for users.

What was this? Anyway, a hero needed to have a coexistence of darkness and light.

"Please make a name for the group," Kenzo requested. He wanted a name from Crockta. If they were to follow him, it seemed right that he give them a name.

"The road that Kenzo walks will be long and full of blades. The path of pandemonium that not everyone can walk!" Crockta declared, "With that type of mindset, I will call it Mountain of Sabres, Forest of Swords.

"Mountain of Sabres, Forest of Swords!"

A cool name. The words were true. Last night, he had gone through the moneylenders. In the place where the moneylenders turned into white particles, only their weapons and equipment were left behind.

It really was a mountain of sabres, a forest of swords.

"Those who follow you will be part of a Mountain of Sabres, Forest of Swords."

Kenzo looked at the red headband around Crockta's forehead. The red headband would be their symbol. This was the beginning of 'Mountain of Sabres, Forest of Swords', following 'Rehabilitation Brothers' and 'He's an Orc, yet still Praiseworthy'. Unfortunately, the name 'Mountain of Sabres, Forest of Swords' was unknown to most people.

The red headband was so intense that people just called them 'Red Headband'...



“Did something good happen *dot*?”

“Kulkulkul. No. Kulkul.”

Anor and Tiyo stared at the laughing Crockta. They were leaving Quantes and heading to Maillard. They planned to go through there towards the cities in the south. The party was riding the caruks that they obtained from the north. The caruks were slower than horses, but they had good endure and physical strength. They moved well even when carrying someone of Crockta’s size.

“Look at your expression. Tell me quickly. I want to know the good thing.”

“It is really nothing.”

“Then why do you look so bright?”

Crockta was thinking about his meeting with Kenzo before leaving Quantes.

“Kulkul.”

Kenzo had punished the moneylenders brilliantly. Furthermore, he even reached the Pinnacle. Then he declared that he would make a group to follow Crockta. The name was Mountain of Sabres, Forest of Swords!

Crockta hadn’t done much, but it was pleasing to see, just like a filial child. Now the name of Crockta would once again shake the world. If he logged out at this time, he could see what his fanclub ‘He’s an Orc, yet still Praiseworthy’ was doing.

The fame that everyone desired! It was healing.

“It is difficult to be famous. Kulkulkul!”

He wondered if he would be stalked by some fans. Crockta worried about this alone.

“I don’t know what it is but...” Anor shook his head.

They rode steadily on the caruks and soon saw the sign for Maillard. They would soon arrive.

Maillard was a place containing the Information Guild and where Stella worked at the Blacksmith Company. In addition, there was the legend of the 'Rehabilitation Brothers' who rehabilitated problematic users.

Crockta recalled his old memories and drove the caruk quickly. Suddenly, they were able to see a group of people. Their eyes met Crockta's party. Crockta greeted them respectfully first.

"Hello. I am alive."

"...Ah, yes."

They gazed at Crockta, then checked Tiyo and Anor's foreheads before looking unimpressed. They were users. Users didn't have much interest in NPCs. In particular, they were users on par with NPCs. As the level of the users increased, they became more arrogant.

"They have a very cheap way of greeting people *dot*," Tiyo muttered. He talked to himself but everyone could hear him. The eyes of the users turned to him. Tiyo just shrugged.

The atmosphere became slightly tense. However, both sides didn't do anything else so there wasn't a conflict.

"Put up with it. He looks like a kid."

"Have you see them? I can't wait to catch those GB bastards."

"Wait and watch. Stay still until we get instructions from Brother."

Crockta heard their conversation. They said 'GB', which was the abbreviation for Rehabilitation Brothers. It looked like a group that wasn't on good terms with them.

"Hmmm..."



Crockta's group continued until they reached Maillard. They were able to reach Maillard, the great and beautiful city of the elves.

Anor's eyes widened. If Quantes was a city built with the technical skills of the gnomes, Maillard was a large elf city. The buildings were in harmony with nature, and the form was so beautiful that it felt perfectly with Anor's dark elf sensibilities. It was truly a city of elves, the cradle of elf users.

Anor wandered around with wide eyes and couldn't take his eyes off Maillard.

"Isn't it cool?"

"Really great. Wow..."

"Bah, this is nothing compared to Quantes."

They were able to easily enter because Maillard didn't have any restrictions on access. He was planning to leave after finding the Information Guild and Stella, so they weren't going to stay long. But the atmosphere inside was strange.

To be exact, it was the atmosphere among the users.

".....?"

Crockta was confused. The Maillard citizens were still the same. As inhabitants of Elder Lord, they were living their own lives.

By the way, the users with white stars on their foreheads were looking around and watching something. They were holding their weapons and seemed prepared to fight at any time. Some users stared at each other in a confrontational manner when passing by. A tight tension could be felt between the users.

"Interesting," Crockta muttered.

What was happening in Maillard?

"We will stay here tonight. Look around and come back again."

"I understand *dot*."

"I'll go explore!"

"Wait, let's go together *dot*!"

Crockta headed towards the Information Guild first. He headed towards the darker part of the city, towards the streets lined with shabby pubs. He was coming back. It was the place where there were real men. The headquarters of Maillard's Information Guild.

"Kulkukul, it is still a beautiful inverted triangle."

Crockta muttered as he looked at the sign for the pub. It was right there. The 'Where are my Brothers?' pub!

CHAPTER 138

ERA OF REGRET

Time was like running water.

For ancient kingdoms that had perished, after a long time, a historian would pass through the ruined city and say things like ‘the old fields were overgrown with barley, and they were rich in rice stalks and millets.’

There were things that people hoped wouldn’t change. However, the might of time changed everything. Everything they believed wouldn’t change would actually fade someday. A new era wasn’t a decline, but a resurrection. Nevertheless, there were those who missed the past and lamented that things weren’t the same.

It was the same for Crockta.

He headed towards the ‘Where are my Brothers?’ pub. At the entrance, there was a refreshing smell that he hadn’t expected to exist: a feminine perfume scent mixed with flowers and citrus. The sharpness of the scent’s top notes pierced his nose. Clear laughter surrounded him as he entered the pub.

The waitress approached and welcomed, “Hello, how can I help you?”

Crockta raised his head. A young and fresh girl. The menu had all types of dishes nearly listed. There were sets available for a large group of people. There were also couple sets. In the midst of this confusion, Crockta could only gaze desperately at the menu.

This wasn’t an illusion. He knew this was the place. This was the ‘Where are my Brothers?’ pub.

Crockta forcibly opened his mouth and spoke without checking the menu.

“Cream spaghetti.”

The expression of the employee didn’t change.

“...And chopsticks.”

There was a bright smile. She replied 'Yes' in a cheerful voice and left.

Crockta raised his head. Nobody was laughing at him. Crockta sank wearily into the chair. At the next table, a man and woman burst out laughing. Behind him were some youths that were whispering together.

He didn't know where to look. It was confusing rather than shameful. He felt a mixed sense of insult and betrayal. This was the 'Where are my Brothers?' pub; but it had now turned into a fusion pub with a bright atmosphere that was aimed at young people.

"Here is your cream spaghetti. Please enjoy!"

Crockta accepted the plate of cream spaghetti with chopsticks nearly arranged on the table. There was even a mat to place the chopsticks. But what now? He placed the chopsticks in the cream spaghetti like he was holding a knife. The noodles were like the enemies.

Crockta ate the cream spaghetti. It was delicious, causing him to become sadder.

Suddenly,

'An orc ordering cream spaghetti... This isn't a comedy!'

Crockta raised his head. He looked around but didn't see the owner of the voice. It was a hallucination.

'Isn't that a dish for girls? Kukukuk...'

He continued using his chopsticks as the suppressed memories rose.

'Will he also order strawberry juice and a kiwi parfait? Kelkelkel...!'

These voices were only heard in his head. Instead, silly conversations such as 'Cream spaghetti is delicious,' 'Shall we eat?' and 'Is there a menu like that?' entered his ears.

'The old fields are overgrown with barley, and they were are rich in rice stalks and millets.'

Crockta thought with longing as he chewed on his cream spaghetti. Then he drew an

inverted triangle with the last piece of cream spaghetti. He waited.

“Hey, Orc.” It was the voice from his memories. Crockta got up from his spot. It was the owner of the ‘Where are my Brothers?’ and the head of the Information Guild’s branch in Maillard.

That man.

The two didn’t greet each other. Crockta wanted to blame him, but couldn’t open his mouth because of the deep look in the owner’s eyes. He could tell that they shared the same feelings.

“Come here.”

He guided Crockta to another place.



The interior of the pub was changed, but the secret passage was still there. They walked through a door and entered the basement. There was a table in the room and it gave off the feeling of an interrogation room.

The two sat facing each other. Back here, there were no differences.

“You have become big. It hasn’t been so long since I’ve seen you,” the owner said with a mock bow.

Crockta replied in a profound manner, “It has been a long time, long enough for things to change.”

“.....”

The man laughed bitterly. Then he changed the topic.

“Yes, well, didn’t you come because of the Thawing Balhae Clan? A group of those who have been cursed by the stars. In the meantime, I’ve gained enough information. Northern Conqueror Crockta who rebuilt the north.”

“How do you know that?”

“A divine message came down to the temples. All the gods whispered your name. Crossing the northern limit line, conquering the north and preventing a terrible war. The hero of the north who killed the crazy chieftain.”

Crockta nodded. There would be more gods on the continent apart from the grey god, the world tree or the ‘Tribulation’ that he killed. The system messages for users were regarded as divine messages for the inhabitants of Elder Lord.

The man pulled out some information.

Crockta read through the contents in turn.

It was as expected. The Thawing Balhae members had joined the Heaven and Earth Clan. The Thawing Balhae’s clan leader and Grom, no Hyunchul. He had the new name ‘Luin’ and was part of the Heaven and Earth Clan. They combined their abilities with the combat capabilities of ‘Rommel’ Choi Hansung, the so-called genius of war. In the land of the south, he was in touch with the nobles and planning more wars.

Indeed, the Information Guild had gathered a lot of information while he was in the north. There weren’t only one or two documents. There were several hypothetical scenarios of what they would do in the future.

“Too bad.”

The man looked up at Crockta’s words. “Sorry, is it not enough? It isn’t easy to obtain such information.”

“I’m not talking about the information. The information is excellent.”

“.....”

The man was silent. Crockta wasn’t talking about the information. The man knew very well what Crockta was talking about.

“The transaction will continue in the future. Thanks for the information.”

“...You’re welcome.”

They got up from their seats. The Information Guild’s branch manager touched his chin and called out to Crockta again. “Wait. I have one more thing.” He placed his hand

back in the small hole in the wall. It was the hole where the guild members handed him the materials. Then he handed new documents to Crockta.

“It is a gift.”

“A gift?”

“A gift for the orc warrior who saved the continent.”

Crockta received the papers. It was a single document with the tag ‘Uncertain’ on it.

“Uncertain data shouldn’t be distributed, but I will show you this specifically. It still isn’t clear but I thought you should know.”

Crockta’s eyes widened. The information was shocking. The Heaven and Earth Clan was preparing for a larger war after sweeping through the north. And their goal...

It was all the orcs on the continent, including Orcrox. The current relationship between humans and orcs weren’t good. The reason he chose the greatsword, the greatsword master Leyteno had fought for the orcs in the war, and the remnants of that war still remained.

Now the uncomfortable relationship was like a tradition. They were planning to drive a wedge between the two species to create a bigger war. It wasn’t enough to kill Lenox, they wanted to trample on the rest of the orcs.

It was just a ‘quest’ and ‘game content’ to them.

Crunch.

Crockta gritted his teeth. There were more reasons to crush them.

“Thank you.”

The owner extended his hand. Crockta shook it. The two of them exchanged a look and came up to the pub.

Once again, it was an unfamiliar landscape. This was the ‘Where are my Brothers?’ pub that was a front for the Information Guild. But now, it had surpassed its purpose of simple camouflage. In times where business was becoming increasingly difficult, the

Information Guild had to renovate while thinking of profit. The pub was now a business, not a camouflage.

It was a decision barely made after some suffering. He knew it with his head. Nevertheless, Crockta couldn't help feeling regret.

"...The pub has changed a lot."

"It can't be helped. The deficit would've continued otherwise."

Crockta looked at the flirtatious couples and the young men and women whispering together, and admitted that times had changed. It had become too perky. The males full of masculinity would be long gone.

"Hey." Crockta looked at the owner of the Information Guild with sad eyes. "A roasted pig, is it possible to get that here?"

".....!"

"I would like to eat a whole roasted pig..."

The owner's eyes widened. He dropped his head like he couldn't bear looking at Crockta anymore. He hesitated a moment before barely opening his mouth.

"That menu..." He smiled and continued speaking. "I don't have that dish anymore."

Times had changed. The stories of the real men who ridiculed cream spaghetti, hated fruit juice, and chewed on big pieces of meat were over.

"I see." Crockta nodded. "I will have whiskey. A bottle please."

The owner handed over the whiskey. Crockta paid the price and opened the lid. He took a sip straight from the bottle of whiskey.

"Heol, look at that person...!"

"Oh my, what is this? That orc?"

"He is drinking from the bottle. Aiyah. Isn't that a strong whiskey?"

“Amazing, amazing!”

Crockta laughed.

These young ones. In the past, there was a time when one would be teased if they didn't do this. It was the era of real males.

Crockta started moving. He headed towards the exit of the ‘Where are my Brothers?’ pub. Looking at the bright faces of the couples coming in, Crockta thought this wasn't too bad either. The men and women smiled as they looked at each other. There was obvious affection in their eyes.

This was also good.

Crockta grabbed the door. He pushed at the cold handle. The door closed behind him. He walked away from the ‘Where are my Brothers?’ pub. A gust of wind blew through the streets of Maillard and past him.

He suddenly turned his head. He could see the scenery of Maillard. The lights shining, the drunkards on the streets, people heading home to prepare for a lively day tomorrow. Somewhere out there, the men would still be living their lives.

“There is no need for regrets”

‘Where are my Brothers?’ might've turned into a lively fusion bar but their place in Maillard hadn't completely disappeared. Somewhere in Maillard, the manly men would still be moving.

“I am just a little sad.” Crockta raised the whiskey bottle. He didn't drink from it. Crockta tilted it. The whiskey poured out onto the ground.

“For the real men who aren't here anymore.”

He poured out all of the whiskey. A tribute to the past. He recalled the beautiful time and the manly men.

He drank towards a bygone era.

CHAPTER 139

PAPILLON (1)

“There is nothing eternal in the world,” Crockta muttered. He knew that the world would change one day, but he couldn’t help being in a bittersweet mood. “The world and the people will change.”

He turned away from ‘Where are my Brothers?’ and towards his accommodations. He bought some cheap beer from the street stalls and slowly sipped on it. Then he whistled and staggered through the back alleys.

“Mister is right,” someone said. Crockta turned his head and saw a drunk man with flushed cheeks blowing his nose.

“There is nothing eternal in the world.”

Crockta’s intoxicated eyes looked at him. There was a star on his forehead and decent clothing. A high-level user who couldn’t be ignored. Perhaps he was even more than that. Crockta had already become too strong, so all users seemed low level to him.

He approached Crockta. “Mister Orc, were you betrayed by someone?”

“Betrayal...”

He thought the Information Guild would maintain that wonderful atmosphere. He never doubted that the pub would be a shelter for men. But in the end, the pub’s deficit had continued. Now there were no traces of the old days.

However, it couldn’t be called a betrayal. Life was unpredictable. He wasn’t betrayed. He just passed through a section of his life. He wasn’t a child disappointed because his expectations were betrayed. He was an adult who knew how to view the world in a calm manner.

“Did someone betray you?” Crockta asked instead of replying. He waited. Drunk people often talked to strangers because they were looking for someone to listen to them.

“Yes. I was betrayed,” the man replied. “When I was laughing, people laughed with me. However, when I fell into hell, nobody would be around me.”

Crockta nodded. It was a familiar story of an ordinary person’s regrets...

“I thought she would pick me up if I fell, but she kicked me away. A false love.”

Oh, a story of a broken heart. Crockta sighed.

“Color is empty, a person with no...” The man bowed his head and murmured something. “And I can’t hate her...”

“Be strong.” Crockta wanted to comfort him but he didn’t know what to say. So he said the most common but nonsensical things possible to someone suffering from a broken heart. “There are many females in the world.”

Even Crockta thought it was ridiculous. The man laughed and stumbled, losing his balance and falling against the wall.

“Ah, I feel like becoming drunk.”

“I think you are already drunk enough.”

“Do you want a drink?” The man asked.

Tiyo and Anor would be sleeping in the inn by now. Crockta considered for a moment before nodding.

“That would be nice.”

He wouldn’t fall asleep easily anyway, since he was drunk. When visiting the ‘Where are my Brothers?’ pub, he thought he would drink all night with the men there. However, there was no longer a place for him, so he decided to drink with this man.

The two of them walked shoulder to shoulder in the darkness of the alley.

The man was surprisingly sober.



“Kuoooooh...”

Crockta groaned as he opened his eyes. It was a strange ceiling. There was a rough ceiling and exposed concrete walls. He raised his body and recalled yesterday's memories. He remembered drinking with a man that he met. But what happened after that? It was hazy.

He drank a lot of alcohol. After that, he didn't remember clearly until he opened his eyes in this place.

It was a strange prison.

“.....”

Crockta calmly sat on the bed. Steel bars were blocking his way.

Crockta touched his chin. Bare hands. His precious Ogre Slayer couldn't be seen. The Demon's Mouth was still on his waist, but apart from that, everything that could be a weapon had disappeared.

He closed his eyes and searched for the final memory. He continued drinking with the mysterious man. The man had talked about his old lover, how pretty and cool she was, then showed off the typical drunken behavior at her abandonment.

Crockta had listened to his sorrows while drinking. Then the man invited him. It was late to return to his accommodations. He should go back with the man and drink some more.

Crockta followed him. After that, he couldn't remember well.

“I'm an intelligent orc. Now, let's think about this.” Crockta muttered. Talking helped to organize his thoughts. “Did he approach me yesterday to deceive me?”

No. His attitude was the truth. It wasn't possible to for all of that to be acting. The man had repeatedly called out to the old lover who left him, then vomited before reminiscing again. It was the stubbornness of someone who really had their heart broken.

“Then was I kidnapped on the way to the man’s house?”

He looked through his memories. In his faint memories, there was a scene where he and the man bumped glasses together. It was in a room. The man said that although he lost his woman, he was glad to have such a wonderful orc brother.

It was clear they had reached his house. Then something happened after that. A surprise attack. Or...

Crockta approached the bars. He adjusted his angle to view as much of the surroundings as possible. There was the shaking of a shadow in the hallway. A guard was over there. Crockta opened his mouth.

“You over there!” Crockta shouted. “I just woke up so explain this! Cough!”

His throat was dry. The scent of alcohol was coming from his mouth. He must’ve drunken a lot of alcohol yesterday. The man was fine.

The sound of footsteps neared. Crockta returned to the bed and sat down. He didn’t know the situation but he had to seem relaxed in front of the opponent. Rather, he wanted to rebuke the opponent.

“Your steps are slow.”

Of course, he actually was very calm. This was interesting. Anyway, right now he was Crockta, the warrior who rose to the Hero rank. The great chieftain of the north. This situation was too lacking to be hard for him.

“I’m sorry.”

“.....!”

But this time, Crockta was surprised. He was completely off the mark. The person standing in front of him. It was the man he was drinking with last night, the one who called him brother and blamed his ex-lover. He stood outside the cell with a group of users.

“It is regrettable.” Then the man opened his mouth.

It was a face without any expression. A cool and businesslike attitude. What was the

truth behind this man? Crockta grinned. The man had performed as a weak and drunk person, but his eyes were rather cold.

He examined Crockta before nodding. "It was a great coincidence."

"Did you forget your girlfriend?"

"....."

Crockta's words pierced him but he didn't shake.

"You are Crockta." So that's what happened. Crockta guessed the situation. "Northern Conqueror Crockta was drinking in an alley. That reputation is in vain."

Now he wasn't anonymous like he used to be. There were all sorts of videos about him, and his fame had risen due to the system messages about the NPC who helped Shakan open the north and the one who killed the crazy chieftain.

Kenzo didn't know Crockta's name, but he was an unusual case.

"If I hadn't memorized your face as a clan member, I would've thought you were just a drunk orc."

"You know it is me, but you are locking me up?"

"Of course."

The fact that they imprisoned him despite knowing he was Crockta meant one thing. They were users with a hostile relationship to him.

"I caught you as a warning to those ridiculous Rehabilitation Brothers."

The Rehabilitation Brothers was a group begun by Crockta. He enlightened three users and after becoming a new person overnight due to Crockta's efforts, they tried to change the world of Elder Lord.

So this was a clan that they didn't have a good relationship with. And speaking of hostile clans, he had one as well.

"Anyone who is a target of the Heaven and Earth Clan will eventually become like this."

The Heaven and Earth Clan, the self-proclaimed strongest clan, used their armed forces to sweep away any disobedience. “I should return to the introductions. “I am Edgar, responsible for the Maillard branch of the Heaven and Earth Clan.”

“What? I thought you were Edgar, the woman whiner?”

“.....”

The expressions of the clan members standing beside Edgar changed. It seemed like they had never seen Edgar like that. Edgar’s face distorted before he regained his composure.

“It is meaningless to talk about this with an NPC like you. You will be executed as soon as possible, just wait. I will send your neck to your rehabilitated friends.”

Crockta shrugged and asked. “NPC? What does that mean?” The people who are cursed by the stars always call us NPCs.”

“There is no need to know. You are just a fake. It doesn’t matter if you die.”

“No caring if I die. How terrible.”

Crockta got up from the bed and headed to the bars. The clan members stepped back, but Edgar stayed in his spot and gazed straight at Crockta. Crockta looked down at him and laughed.

“As you said, I am Crockta. Do you think you can afford to hold Northern Conqueror Crockta?”

“.....”

“These bars are nothing.”

Crockta grabbed the bars with both hands. Then he used his strength. His muscles swelled. The faces of the clan members turned speculative. Crockta gradually started forcing open the bars.

Overwhelming power! Crockta bent the steel bars with his great strength. Due to his strength, he managed to widen the bars by one centimeter. Truly, a monstrous orc warrior.

“...Ooooooup!”

Crockta used more strength. He used all his power but only managed to spread it open 0.5 centimeters more. The fearsome Crockta had opened the bars by 1.5 centimeters!

“T-T-This is my limit. Are you surprised?”

Crockta rubbed his hands against his thighs and asked. Edgar nodded and acknowledged his strength. “Amazing. These bars were strengthened with magic, so that not even an ogre can open it. I will acknowledge your power.”

“If I try harder, I can open it another two centimeters, so treat me politely if you don’t want me to exit.”

“Be careful, these steel bars are precious. Please be patient.” A clan member whispered something in Edgar’s ear. He nodded. “Something has happened. Then, I’ll see you later.”

Edgar and the Heaven and Earth members walked away.

Crockta stood in front of the bars until their shadows completely disappeared. Then Crockta sat down again on the bed.

He muttered in a low voice, “If only I had a blade...”

CHAPTER 140

PAPILLON (2)

Crockta sat on the bed. The steel bars were so tightly packed together that it was difficult for Crockta to bend them enough for his body to pass through. If so, he needed to try another place. He looked at the walls. The rough surface looked hard, but it might be deceptive. Maybe this wall consisted of easily broken rocks, just like in the movies.

“Let’s see...”

Crockta touched his chin. His escape strategy was simple. In the moment before they executed him, or the moment they came into the prison to do something to him, he would defeat them with his skills.

Crockta didn’t feel like the situation was very urgent as he didn’t think he would be killed. But he was bored staying still. If he was imprisoned, he was tempted to try all methods of escape before eventually gaining his freedom.

“I don’t have anything good.”

There was only the bed in the prison. This didn’t seem to be a long-term detention center as there was not even a toilet. Crockta got up and looked at the legs of the bed. He could use those. Crockta broke one of the four legs of the bed.

Crunch!

The orc’s large hand grasped it and twisted, breaking the wooden leg. A sharp piece of wood emerged from the broken off section. Crockta used it to scratch at the wall.

Kikikikik.

Kkikikik.

“.....”

There was no change. The finish on the walls was poor but it was still concrete. His

physical means were gone. The resources in the environment couldn't help him. Therefore, he needed to use human-assisted psychological escape.

Crockta approached the steel bars and looked outside. The people had gone away, but they left one guard here. Crockta called out, "Hey."

There was no answer. Crockta spoke again, "Hey..."

This time, he spoke in a powerless and weary voice. He staged a little bit of fear.

"Is there nobody..."

There was the feeling of someone jumping in the distance. The guard seemed to struggle for a moment before walking to the prison where Crockta was. Crockta sat down on the bed.

"What is going on?"

A star on his forehead. Shabby attire. Weak atmosphere. It was an ordinary user with a low position in the Heaven and Earth Clan. His back was straight since he was nervous about confronting the famous orc warrior, Crockta. Crockta was slumped over in a pathetic manner, in order to meet his expectations.

"Excuse me... really... I'll be executed...?"

Moist eyes! Who would've ever thought that he was the brutal orc warrior Crockta, the one who killed the great chieftain in the north and wiped out any opponents! The man's face softened as he felt compassion for Crockta.

"That's right."

"I still have a lot of work left to do... there is also the situation with my gold and treasures..." Crockta muttered to himself.

His words caught the guard's interest. The thought of gold and treasure always shook people's hearts.

"Ahh... I..." Crockta made a distressed sound, making it seem like he was troubled. His method acting made the guard look at him like he was pathetic.

“...Hoo.” Crockta’s expression stiffened before getting up from the bed.

A fearsome pressure suddenly surrounded Crockta, causing the guard to step back. There weren’t many people who could endure Crockta’s killing intent. The guard felt his legs trembling. The moment that he was about to leave due to the sudden change,

Crockta called out, “People die anyway. There is no regret about the path I walked. However, it is shameful that I can’t pass on the orc’s secret sword of justice!”

They were the eyes of a man ready to die. Crockta looked at the guard. He stared blankly at Crockta. Crockta said in a loud voice, “I will soon die by the hands of your leader. I have taken many lives so it isn’t unjust.”

The image of a dignified person in front of death was always impressive.

“You are the last person I will meet! Although you aren’t an orc, I would like to teach you the orc’s secret technique.”

“.....!”

The man’s eyes widened. Anyone who read martial arts novels would know what this was. A once in a lifetime chance!

Furthermore, the orc he was facing wasn’t just any orc. Anyone familiar with Elder Lord would know about the Righteous Orc Crockta, crushed of users and the one who killed the great chieftain before the giant quest could start. Wouldn’t it be strange if such an NPC was executed without an event?

The guard began to interpret the situation according to his own desires. That’s right. This was a type of special event or quest. The orc wanted to pass on everything before he was killed. It was natural for an artificial intelligence to be programmed to pass on their legacy before death.

What would be the legacy of a great warrior in the world of Elder Lord?

Today, an opportunity came to him.

“I...”

“Only!” Crockta struck the player. By setting conditions, it would let the guard know

that this wasn't easy. Humans coveted what was difficult. It might be difficult, but it was the right type of hardship that one could endure.

"You must make an oath to pass on this secret technique to another orc. This is a one-man martial art. You can never break this."

The guard was already blinded by greedy so this type of condition didn't matter. Rather, it just added fuel to his desires.

"Do you promise?"

"I do!"

"Then I will say my name. I am Crockta, your mentor."

The guard started to paint an image of becoming a ranker, then driving a gorgeous supercar bought with the profits. Celebrities would want to meet him and everyone would look surprised at his name. He would become a top-notch player in this world, even better than Rommel, master of the Heaven and Earth Clan. He would have splendid parties in a nice house and hang around beautiful women. A sweet life that no one could ignore!

Now it was time to start a new life as 'Ranker Lee Jungmin.' He shouted, "Crockta! My name is Lee Jungmin!"

"A nice name. Bow to me and tell the heavens that I will be your master."

"Yes!"

Crockta looked at Lee Jungmin bowing. It was a ritual common in martial arts novels so he didn't suspect anything. Greed always clouded people's eyes.

Lee Jungmin bowed nine times before breathing out roughly. "Heok, heok. It is done, Master."

"Okay. Come up to me and bow. I will give you a blessing."

"Yes!"

Now, the man had no doubts at all. The future of the Heaven and Earth Clan was dark

if this was a guard.

Lee Jungmin bowed his head. "Please take care of me, Master!"

"Okay. Come closer."

"T-This is as close as possible..."

If Lee Jungmin moved any further, his head would hit the iron bars. Crockta nodded.

"It is enough."

He moved up close to the bars, stretched out a hand, and grabbed the guard's neck.

"...Cough!"

Lee Jungmin struggled as he was raised in the air. Crockta laughed cruelly, "Stupid person! It is so easy to fool you! You have a walnut in your head, not a brain!"

"Y-You, l-lie...! Keok...!"

"You are the one who was deceived. Anyway, life is a stage for liars so you should always stay calm and keep an eye on the truth. Stupid guy!"

Lee Jungmin's consciousness gradually faded away. "T-Treating me like this... you will regret..."

"Hoh?" Crockta twisted Lee Jungmin's neck more brutally. "How will I regret it?"

"Keok... keok... hoo... hal..."

Lee Jungmin completely collapsed. Crockta grabbed the bunch of keys hanging from his waist and threw the body roughly on the ground. The body started turning into white particles. The dead were silent.

"Huhu, regret it elsewhere."

Crockta admired his acting skills as he placed the key in the lock of the door. The door was opened. He escaped.

“Kuhahaha, kuhahahat! Who else can trap me?” He grinned as he looked at the last particles of Lee Jungmin. “Not Lee Jungmin.”

Lee Jungmin’s poor heart. He had been overwhelmed by all the dreams pushed in front of him. However, such hope also drove people to move towards the future. Crockta had used method acting to escape from this terrible prison. If he hadn’t tried to escape like this, he would’ve spent a few depressing hours trapped. It would’ve definitely been a horrible time.

Crockta opened his arms and closed his eyes. He enjoyed the freedom with his whole body as he muttered a line from a movie he loved.

“Hope is a good thing. The most precious thing. And good things will never disappear.”

He recalled Lee Jungmin’s final warning that he would regret this. Crockta laughed as he headed outside the prison. Then his feet twisted in a strange way and his nose struck the ground.

“Keook!”

Blood flowed down from his nose. He got up from the floor while pressing a hand against his pained nose. Crockta grabbed it and whined.

“It is strange.” There weren’t many instances where he lost his balance.

It happened when Crockta, who had been moving for a while, was walking through the outer passage of the prison.

“Kuak!”

A torch hanging on a wall suddenly fell and hit his foot. The fire was scattered. Crockta held one foot and jumped while putting out the fire, as his face twisted from the pain.

“What is this...?”

Crockta couldn’t see because he had shut his eyes in pain and slammed his head into the wall.

“Kuak!”

He fell down. Why were all these ridiculous things happening? A coincidence? Crockta, who was caught in a strange situation, closed his eyes and decided to breathe. He held down the pain and muttered an apology to Lee Jungmin.

“S-Sorry...”

Crockta slowly raised his body. As he continued walking, he saw a table with some items on it. His beloved Ogre Slayer was seen. Crockta placed it in the sheath on his back. Edgar had done something wrong, so Crockta didn't feel ashamed at all, except for the poor guard who was killed by him.

“Good.”

Crockta started running along the corridor. Now there was nothing to stop him. Edgar pretended to be cool and rational, but it was time to squeeze the whiner out of him.



“What is this *dot*?” Tiyo asked.

They were watching Maillard.

Mailliard's specialty was the 'Coin Fountain' in the main square. There was a saying that throwing a coin in here would cause a wish to come true, so the fountain sparkled with the shine of the coins thrown in by citizens and visitors. The gold coins were gathered and used to help the people at the temple.

There was a signpost in front of the Coin Fountain.

[This tradition was made by Orc Warrior Crockta. He captured three wicked people disturbing Maillard and said to them, 'This isn't just a fountain, but a means to help the poor.' The three disciples went out and comforted citizens in the daily lives, helped those in trouble... (Omitted)]

“...This Crockta isn't our Crockta right *dot*?”

“Aish, surely not. Our Crockta isn’t as nice as this Crockta.”

“I agree, kyahahat! I am better *dot*!”

“That’s right. It is just the same name. Hihit.”

They turned away after throwing a gold coin each. Then Tiyo asked Anor. “So that Crockta isn’t our Crockta either, right *dot*?”

“.....”

A newsletter was being scattered all over the square. Citizens passing by just glanced at it.

These were the contents:

[The Heaven and Earth Clan’s execution of Crockta! We have captured Crockta. He will be executed in the plains outside Maillard. This is for all people who go against the Heaven and Earth Clan. Once the sun rises to its highest point, he will be executed.]

Anor was confused.

“I don’t think so? This Crockta is weaker than our Crockta. This Crockta got caught, hahaha. He wouldn’t be able to come back alive from Calmahart.”

“Kyahahat, that’s right. Our Crockta is someone who killed the great chieftain, so how can he be caught *dot*? It isn’t like he would be taken out while drinking. Kahahat! This Crockta is pathetic *dot*!”

“Crockta must be a common name.”

“I think so as well *dot*.”

Tiyo and Anor moved while laughing.

CHAPTER 141

WHEN I WAS DOWN (1)

Crockta cocked his head as he walked down the street.

“Execute me? Kulkulkul.”

What cute people. They had accidentally captured him, and yet they were confident that they could execute him? Their actions were too hasty.

“Edgar. Do you only have this much?”

Crockta remembered drinking with Edgar, the one who imprisoned him. Edgar might’ve forgotten it, but Crockta remembered the stories that were shared. He was a decent man. Crockta appreciated the fact that he noticed Crockta’s identity and quickly imprisoned him, as well as Edgar’s cold and rational behavior in front of his men.

Edgar did what he had to do. Their positions were different. As the leader of a group, he was a man who knew exactly what he had to do. Kill the symbol of the enemy. The more that morale fell, the less the enemies would be able to fight back.

However, the opponent was Crockta. Edgar was too impatient.

“You said that a leader should be a castle,” Crockta muttered.

Edgar had drunkenly told Crockta,

‘I’m the leader. The leader, a castle. Who would want a castle who shakes when the wind blows? I must be an unshakable castle. Cool and hard. Sometimes it is hard, but it is part of being a man. Brother!’

Who was Crockta to judge a man acting like a solid castle?

“Well, put in front of a bit person like me, he will just get hurt.”

Crockta nodded. It was unfortunate. Crockta had decided on war on the Heaven and

Earth clan. Therefore, if they wanted to execute him, Crockta would come to them directly.

“Hey.” Crockta approached a user on the street. He had hidden himself as soon as Crockta appeared and kept looking at Crockta. He was one of the clan members who had been standing next to Edgar.

“.....!”

He thought that he had hidden himself well, but Crockta easily found him. Crockta grinned in a relaxed manner. The other person turned pale.

“Did you think you would stop me with steel bars?”

“How...?”

“Tell this to Edgar. I never run away.” Crockta touched the handle of Ogre Slayer. “You guys have nominated the place so let’s play properly. If you win, it will be a wonderful execution like you planned.”

“.....!”

“If you are scared then you can back out. The Heaven and Earth clan is only this much. Kulkul.”

The user stared blankly at the laughing Crockta. Their eyes were filled with faith.

“Hey, Orc. You have no clue about the Heaven and Earth Clan. Okay, then I’ll see you later. Let’s see how your smug face becomes distorted.”

“Hoh. That seems good.” Crockta also laughed and then raised a fist as he hit the user’s forehead.

“Aack!” It was very painful because his knuckles were solid. The user grabbed his forehead with a yelp. “What?”

“Do you have any complaints?”

“.....”

“Don’t be cocky.”

The chance was good, but the user was annoying, so Crockta had used violence. This was Elder Lord, a world where the fist was similar to the law. The user shook because he didn’t dare go against Crockta.

“You, I’ll see you later!”

He snapped at Crockta and ran away. Crockta gazed after him and laughed.



The plains outside Maillard. There was a group of humans. The lead warrior was Edgar. As he waved the flag of the Heaven and Earth Clan, the users following him shouted. It was a sign of fear to anyone playing Elder Lord. This flag had flown on devastated battlefields. The name ‘Heaven and Earth’, the strongest clan in Elder Lord.

“No matter how skilled or powerful Crockta is, he can’t deal with all of us.” Someone next to Edgar said. Edgar nodded. His expression was still cool and sober.

“The hastily collected mercenaries can disturb our rhythm.” Not all of them were the Heaven and Earth members, as he gathered people to participate in the battle using money.

“Nevertheless, there is still a lot of room.”

“Yes.”

“Deal with Crockta. And...”

He looked around. He didn’t feel anyone approaching.

“These rehabilitation people who will come.”

They announced that they would publicly execute Crockta. It was to stimulate the Rehabilitation Brothers. The Rehabilitation Brothers, whose power started in Maillard, weren’t large in number. However, they stuck together and obstructed the Heaven and Earth Clan. The mission of the Heaven and Earth branch in Maillard was to mainly keep them in check.

This time, if possible, he would put an end to them as well as Crockta. For the sake of today, Edgar had harshly trained his clan members and helped them level up. The Heaven and Earth's leadership trusted him and appointed him in charge of Maillard, so he would do what was necessary to get results.

"He isn't coming."

"It seems like it."

Time passed by Crockta didn't show. The sun was slowly moving above their head. The clan members started murmuring.

"Everyone, don't be shaken." Edgar calmed everyone.

"Is he imitating Miyamoto Musashi?"

"...Crockta doesn't know Musashi, but he is a warrior who has gone through many battles. He might instinctively be aiming for a similar effect."

Japan's swordsman Miyamoto Musashi deliberately arrived late for his duel with Sasaki Kojiro, messing with Kojiro's composure. This allowed Musashi to gain a psychological advantage in the ensuing duel. It was uncertain if this story was true, but based on the situation with Crockta, it seemed to be effective.

Some members were nervous and others were too excited.

"Will he really come?"

"....."

Edgar was silent. He had a point. Edgar might be deceived by the title of Righteous Orc, the honorable warrior. If he lured them here and went elsewhere...

Edgar looked up at the sky again and saw that the sun was started to descend. The appointed time had already passed. His back started tingling. Right now, he had gathered all of the clan members. In other words, there was a minimum number of people at their facilities in Maillard.

The number was too small to fight against Crockta. It would be a big loss if those facilities were destroyed. Crockta had escaped from the prison by luring Lee Jungmin.

He wasn't merely a strong warrior. He was a fighter who didn't hesitate to use sneaky plots.

He was known as a righteous orc, but inside he was more cunning.

Edgar snapped at his members. "Leave..."

However, he couldn't say anything else. There was a group coming from far away.

Ching. Ching. Ching.

It was the sound of steel armor. Edgar sighed.

"They have come."

They were waving a flag with the letters 'Rehabilitation' on it! There was no one in Maillard who didn't know the 'Rehabilitation' flag. The members of Rehabilitation Brothers.

"It is a joke when I look at it."

Unlike the Heaven and Earth's uniform, the Rehabilitation Brothers members were all dressed freely. The Heaven and Earth gazed at them fiercely, and the Rehabilitation Brothers responded with bloody gazes.

"All this tension."

The members of the Rehabilitation Brothers stood before them. Since they were non-clan users, their equipment and combat power was less than the Heaven and Earth Clan. But they were armed with a strong will and never retreated in the face of the Heaven and Earth Clan.

The one who led the Maillard branch of the Rehabilitation Brothers was the hunter class 'Robina', who was rumored to be a national representative in archery. She came forward and spoke to Edgar.

"Is it hard to see my face?" Robina grinned.

Edgar didn't smile.

“Where is Crockta? I heard there was an orc wandering around and that he is called Crockta. You do have him right?” She looked around. “Where is he?”

“Not here.”

“What are you talking about?”

“He escaped.”

She narrowed her eyes, but once Edgar’s expression didn’t change, she burst out laughing.

“Hahahahat, I knew it. How would you be able to catch Crockta?”

“.....”

“How dull.” She shrugged. “Then and now, you are always disappointing me.”

Edgar’s face twitched. He closed his eyes so that his face wouldn’t twist. He settled his emotions and thought about a cool lake to sink his head into. An unshakable and serene water surface with no ripples. His emotions faded.

“Robina. They don’t have Crockta so can’t we fight? Just looking at the traitor’s face makes my stomach hurt,” said the man standing next to Robina.

At that moment, the Heaven and Earth members simultaneously raised their weapons.

“Shut up. If you talk to Edgar like that, we will kill you without mercy.”

“I’ll kill him right away and stop his stomach from hurting.”

“Edgar, let’s kill them.”

Edgar opened his eyes.

Robina’s face was clear. At one time, they were together. Edgar was once a member of Rehabilitation Brothers.

He said, “I wanted to get rid of you along with Crockta anyway.”

“Is that so?”

“This is the last offer. Take everything you own and leave Maillard.”

It was a proposal that couldn't be accepted.

Edgar's Heaven and Earth members were ready to fight as their blades shone under the sun.

“Do you really have to do this?” Robina said while stepping back. Her fingers moved to her quiver. Her strong point was her continuous fire. An arrow would leave the bow as soon as there was the slightest movement.

“I never thought you were a man like this. Ah, there is a lot of disappointment.” She said with a smile

“Disappointment...” Edgar repeated her words and then began to laugh. However, his lungs and diaphragm were cramping and he didn't know if it was really laughter. He just smiled as emotions clashed inside him.

“Yes, how can we understand others?”

Edgar pulled out his sword. The momentum of the clan members was pushing at his back. It was the feeling of being uplifted. But he couldn't get too excited. The fact that there were trustworthy allies calmed him down.

He looked at the Rehabilitation Brothers. At one time, he was with them. Now they were Edgar's enemies. He turned towards Robina in the front. She was still beautiful.

“Heaven and Earth!”

At one time, they had been lovers. She was a special existence to him. Once he fell into hell, he was so caught up in his own problems that he couldn't look around and she left him. After losing the special figure in his life, he felt like he had lost the whole world.

But now it was different. He was more special than her. He would climb to the top. He would climb until she could no longer be seen. So he didn't feel regret anymore. He was just a little sad.

“War!”

In the future, his exciting adventure would continue to unfold and she couldn't accompany him.



“Hah, so those two were dating each other *dot*?”

“It isn't obvious based on their conversation, but he confessed all sorts of things to me while drunk. Kulkukul! Things like ‘I love her more than life.’ Aigoo.”

“It sounds like a play. Their relationship, that is.”

Crockta was chewing on fried corn with Tiyo and Anor.

“Who will win?”

“I guess the Heaven and Earth Clan.”

“Rehabilitation *dot*! The rehabilitation group will win! Look at the strong eyes of that girl *dot*! It is like frost covering the sea *dot*!”

They hid behind a rock and watched the battle between the Heaven and Earth Clan and the Rehabilitation Brothers. The two groups failed to notice as the fierce fight began. In its own way, it was a battle between two clans in Elder Lord. But it seemed dull compared to the great battles they fought in the north.

“I don't like the small number of people *dot*.”

The scale was much smaller than the desperate battle between the dark elves and orcs of the Great Clan.

“Don't say that. War isn't a game.” Anor started arguing with Tiyo.

“I-I'm just saying *dot*.”

“Just saying what? Tsk tsk.”

“.....”

As Edgar pursued Robina, she retreated while firing arrows. As the two lovers transformed into enemies aiming weapons at each other, the hands eating the fried corn became busier.

“But Crockta, shouldn’t you help? Aren’t the Rehabilitation Brothers Crockta’s allies while the Heaven and Earth Clan are your enemies?”

The Rehabilitation Brothers had shown up to rescue Crocktam but now Crockta was just watching. Anor’s eyes narrowed.

“I don’t know.”

Edgar stumbled as Robina’s arrow pierced his shoulder. Crockta focused even more. He chewed on the fried corn as his eyes sharpened. In a fight like this, it was best to watch them struggle first. Besides, users would survive even after dying.

“I’ll just watch first.”

“Good attitude *dot!*”

“Phew.”

CHAPTER 142

WHEN I WAS DOWN (2)

Edgar was a member of the original Rehabilitation Brothers. Those were the enjoyable days. In reality, he was a youth soccer team manager who taught young talents, leading early footballers into leadership positions. In Elder Lord, he enjoyed a world of fantastic adventures. He became a member of the Rehabilitation Brothers, met Robina and became lovers.

However, those good days didn't last.

"I never have good eyes for people. Isn't that right?"

"....."

Robina's arrow flew past his cheek. Edgar touched his cheek and took a step back as his past memories resurfaced.

Misfortune came without warning. The students he taught were forced to leave the squad because of violence. Edgar had no backing so all of the responsibility was placed on him. He hadn't succeeded as a player, and his dream of becoming a world-class manager was canceled. To make matters worse, the business of his parents failed and his immediate livelihood was at risk.

He didn't have time to play the game. He had to face reality. He started work as a laborer. He also reduced the amount of time he met Robina in the game and in reality.

He tried not to but he became more sensitive. Edgar started to gradually lose himself. He was conscious of his shabby self as well as Robina who could fly away like a free-spirited bird at any time. He tried to ignore the cracks but the struggle cut at Edgar's heart.

As his lover, she quickly noticed the changes in Edgar. His anxiety, his longing for her affection, and his occasional lack of confidence weren't part of the man that she once loved. That's why Edgar confessed everything. He talked about losing everything and the economic threat in front of him.

Once the story ended, Robina replied. "What, you became like this because of money?" She was born in a rich house so she couldn't understand Edgar's desperation. "Well, it is like this. It doesn't really matter anymore. We're finished now."

The words stabbed his heart.

"I don't love Oppa anymore."

If she had shown him the same smile and comforted him, he would've been able to stand up again for a short while. No, if she hadn't broken up with him, she would've been a reason for him to fight reality.

But there was no such thing. Edgar collapsed. The one who gave him a chance was the Heaven and Earth Clan. The Heaven and Earth Clan looked at Edgar, who was active in the Rehabilitation Brothers, and suggested he join them.

Heaven and Earth was a large clan. The clan as a whole relied on economic logic. Heaven and Earth Clan members were paid and those in executive positions would be able to earn far more than before. So he joined the Heaven and Earth Clan. Thanks to his excellent performance, he was promoted to head of the Maillard branch.

"At that time, I tried to die but I didn't die."

Edgar muttered as he jumped forward. Robina stepped back quickly. But he had no intention of a one-on-one fight with her. He turned right away and headed towards a member of the Rehabilitation Brothers.

"I didn't die and the pain made me stronger."

He was Edgard, Maillard's Heaven and Earth leader. The confused Robina fired an arrow, but the shield warriors were already blocking her arrows. They persisted pursued Robina. They had already heard all about her strength from Edgar, and used specialist techniques against her.

Once Robina was blocked, the rest was easy. When looking objectively, the Heaven and Earth members were far superior.

"Don't kill as many as possible!"

Edgar shouted, "Use the Concrete method!"

The Concrete method, the act of imprisonment that users feared the most in Elder Lord, was declared. While originally prohibited for users, it was occasionally done in warfare between opposing clans.

People protested to Elder Saga Corporation but their answer was the same as always: User freedom!

“Hah, you’re going to use the Concrete method against us? Are you insane?” Robina shouted.

Edgar didn’t care.

“We are the Heaven and Earth Clan!”

The Heaven and Earth members shouted. The Rehabilitation Brothers started to be pushed. The Heaven and Earth members were strong because they didn’t act individually. It was a virtue that Edgar taught them.

Now the members of the Rehabilitation Brothers were captured one by one. The battle seemed like it would end with the Heaven and Earth Clan’s victory.

“I will rise up.”

He would toss off the illusion of the old lover haunting him and rise to a place much higher than Robina. He would succeed through Elder Lord. If he kept rising in the Heaven and Earth Clan, he would someday become a ranker.

At that moment, a voice could be heard in the distance, “I guess I should come out.”

It was a somewhat familiar voice.

Edgar turned his head. A huge orc was hiding awkwardly behind a rock. Next to him were two figures, a small gnome and a dark elf, who were watching the fight. Crockta and two unidentified people.

As Edgar made eye contact, the dark elf dropped the fried corn he was eating.

“Uwah, our eyes met... cough!”

“Don’t worry.” Crockta whispered to the dark elf. “Raise your head proudly as Crockta’s

friend.”

Crockta glanced at Tiyo. Tiyo was already a proud person, so his neck was automatically stiff. How wonderful. It was enough if they stood shoulder to shoulder.

Crockta nodded and raised his body. It was the appearance of the superstar orc, who drove people to join an orc fan club.

“Are you Crockta?”

“Indeed... really manly...!”

The Heaven and Earth members stopped moving. The faces of the Rehabilitation Brothers being tied up by them brightened. The story that Crockta rehabilitation the three founders of the Rehabilitation Brothers had been passed down like a legend.

He hadn’t been seen since leaving the north, but now he showed up in Maillard. He was truly like the rumors.

A red headband that seemed to represent his strong will. Wild eyes and a large body covered in tattoos. In addition, the greatsword that was almost too big to be a sword, Ogre Slayer! The appearance of an orc warrior who would make people shrink back just looking at him.

This was the founder of the Rehabilitation Brothers.

“I really get to meet him...!”

“Get ready to be hit by Crockta!”

The atmosphere reversed once Crockta placed Ogre Slayer on his shoulders. The same was true for the Heaven and Earth members. They only saw Crockta in captivity, so they never faced him with his full pressure unleashed.

Now overwhelming pressure was pouring out from him.

“That... Crockta...!”

But Edgar didn’t back down. He took one step forward and said, “You were once whining behind the steel bars, but act so brave now that you are outside.” Edgar

mocked him in order to diminish Crockta's influence. "I will let you know the truth of this world, along with your rehabilitation friends. The Heaven and Earth Clan is unbeatable."

Crockta grinned. He was an enemy, but Crockta liked this type of man. Crockta was focused on him but Edgar desperately endured the pressure. An average person legs would've already collapsed.

"Edgar," Crockta called out to him in a soft voice. "You told me over a drink. A leader is a 'castle'."

Edgar's eyes trembled. Crockta was convinced. Edgar remembered what happened when he went on the drinking binge with Crockta.

"I remember all the words you said when drunk. At that time, we were friends. So I am warning you in advance."

Crockta raised his greatsword. It was a big sword. The amount of blood that had covered it would be enough to make a sea.

"The Heaven and Earth Clan will soon perish."

".....!"

It was close to a declaration of war.

"I will get rid of it."

Crockta remembered many of the ruins he saw on the broadcasted videos. The Heaven and Earth Clan. They spread war and famine in Elder Lord. They were multiplying the pain in this room without knowing what they were doing.

Edgar shook his head. "You alone? Don't make me laugh."

At his signal, the Heaven and Earth members surrounded Crockta. The members of the Rehabilitation Brothers couldn't fight anymore so they just watched the confrontation.

"You should discover yourself if it is funny or not."

Crockta raised his greatsword. His opponents had moderately large numbers. But he was the warrior who slaughtered a large army in the north. In addition, he had reached the Hero realm beyond the Pinnacle. This much...

“Heaven and Earth!”

It was laughable.

“War!”

The Heaven and Earth members rushed forward while shouting. Crockta stood still and faced their assault. They weren't a group of ragtag fighters. They were well trained soldiers in a formation that suited individuals as well as group roles. Indeed, it was understandable why the Rehabilitation Brothers had suffered one-sidedly. There weren't many groups of users with such skills.

He saw Edgar heading towards him in the lead.

'All I needed when I fell into hell was for her to hold my hand.'

His drunk face was overlaid on top.

'But she kicked me out. I was too weak. It doesn't matter. I will no longer care.'

He swung his sword. The woman called Robina didn't know how valuable she had been to Edgar. There was no need to know. The past didn't matter, only the fact that swords were pointed towards Crockta. In any case, Edgar was a man desperately living in the present.

In order to rise to the top!

“Great momentum!”

Crockta shouted. He didn't know why this guy was struggling against the world, but he liked it nevertheless.

"But it is still lacking! Bul'tarrrrrrrrrrrrrrr!" Crockta shouted and ran forward.

There were dozens of materials. Crockta was like a chariot as he wielded his greatsword. No one could stop him. Every time he waved his sword, users would be

torn apart as their blood scattered every which way and as their bodies turned into white particles.

He looked beautiful.

“This... is Crockta.”

The members of the Rehabilitation Brothers watched him blankly. Crockta was surrounded by numerous enemies. Every time he wielded his greatsword, blood poured out and white particles filled the air.

Red and white scattered in every direction around him.

They started thinking. He really might end the Heaven and Earth Clan with his own hands.



“How is it?”

Now Crockta and Edgar were the only ones left. The rest had turned into white particles.

“.....”

Edgar couldn't say anything. No matter how great the NPC was, he hadn't expected them to be so overwhelmed. There wasn't a drop of blood flowing from Crockta's body. He was fine, while Edgar's companions had been turned into white particles.

“...I admit defeat.” Edgar sighed.

The end. After this, he would be demoted. Gaining another opportunity wouldn't be easy. He wanted to execute Crockta, but everything was ruined by the dumb guard Lee Jungmin. No, maybe they couldn't afford to go against Crockta in the first place.

No.

Edgar had a hunch. The Heaven and Earth would disappear in the near future. He watched Crockta and couldn't think of a way to stop this orc. Would the top rankers and Choi Hansung of the Heaven and Earth Clan be able to stop this person?

“It was in vain.” Edgar had barely grabbed the rope to climb up, only for it to be cut.

Crockta called out to him, “Edgar. I declared that I will destroy the Heaven and Earth Clan.”

“.....”

“Then what will you do?”

“.....!”

He looked at Crockta. If this man really took down the Heaven and Earth Clan, the world of Elder Lord would be upset. No one thought that Crockta could eliminate the Heaven and Earth Clan alone, but he spoke like he knew the future.

Crockta grinned. “Edgar. On that day, you said that you’d treat me as a brother.”

“I just...”

“My brother.” Crockta came closer and whispered in his ears, “I will never turn away when you fall.”

“.....!”

“I will reach out to you.”

Edgar’s eyes trembled.

Crockta had listened when Edgar said what he wanted. Someone who would stand with him even if he fell into hell. He wanted to hear that the person wouldn’t turn away. If someone had said that to him, it wouldn’t have been so painful. If someone had just held his hand.

Then he wouldn’t have accepted the Heaven and Earth Clan’s proposal.

“If I had met you sooner...”

Edgar closed his eyes. He didn’t regret it then, but he was regretting it now.

Edgar said to Crockta, “Crockta.”

“Um.”

At that moment, Edgar pierced his own neck with his sword.

“What?”

Suicide. Blood flowed down his neck and he soon turned into a flurry of white particles. Edgar muttered something towards Crockta just before the connection was terminated.

Crockta watched carefully.

“It was a great victory Crockta *dot.*” Tiyo said from behind him. But Crockta didn’t move.

He thought about Edgar’s last words. Edgar had spoken without any sound.

‘Beware the Heaven and Earth Clan, Brother.’

CHAPTER 143

HALF-TIME

Ian sat in the cafe and stared out the window. People were passing by. It was summer. People's clothing had become lighter. He was staring absentmindedly when he realized that someone was sitting across from him.

Ian spoke, "You came."

"What are you looking at? You didn't even know I was here."

"Just looking."

He shook his head and smiled at Ji Hayeon. She had a beauty that was hard to find, even in Elder Lord which had a wide range of customization options. So it was a good view.

"Is the lighting here okay?" She pointed to her face and grinned as the sunlight coming through the window made her face shine brightly. "This cafe is good. Oh my, what is this? Do you like mint chocolate? It tastes disgusting, really. You even operate a cafe."

"So don't have any."

"Still, mint chocolate. Eek. Do you usually drink this?"

Ian used a straw to suck up the mint chocolate frappuccino and said, "By the way, did you do what I asked?"

"Your change in topic is too blatant. But well, I understand." She pulled out some documents from her handbag. There wasn't a lot.

Ian's expression became subtle as he looked through the contents. There wasn't much information.

It was about Albino. There was an attempt to identify it. The Myeongsong Group tried an internal scan on Albino, but the surface was an unknown material and the insides didn't seem to have any connections, making it impossible to guess how it was

assembled.

It was like something that fell from outer space. There was no success so the Myeongsong left the research of Albino to Park Jujin. Apart from Albino, there was also the personal information of those involved.

The key was Yoo Jaehan.

“Yoo Jaehan is the creator of Albino. Originally, his interest wasn’t in this direction.”

“Interest?”

“He didn’t have an interest in games or computers. He was originally a physicist.”

“A physicist made the game?”

“Physicists are involved in game production, but it is rare for them to plan and produce their own game. No, there is no one who has done that. He was a genius so it didn’t seem strange.”

Ian looked at the photo on the piece of paper. A familiar face. There was a type of loneliness hidden in the eyes. It was a familiar look he had seen before. There were also personal details such as his personality and life.

Ian glanced at Ji Hayeon. She made eye contact with Ian and smiled. The attempt to look beautiful was successful, but Ian felt a strange sense of goose bumps.

[A misanthropic personality. He was religious as a youth, but devoted himself to the study of physics... (Omitted).]

Thus far, it was okay.

[Despite this, he had a lot of relationships with women. At the age of 23, he dated Kim Yina (22). They parted after 7 months. Yoo Jaehan was nonchalant. By the the end of the year, he started dating Yoko Yanagisawa (33), a university professor. The relationship was good for a while... During a one-year leave, he met the blonde Cabrina in San Francisco... (Omitted).]

[His eating habits vary greatly. He preferred a vegetarian style diet when religious, but after showing misanthropic tendencies, he didn’t care about his health and ate meat.

Smoking and drinking as well. Fried eggs every morning... (Omitted).]

[He always has a habit of drinking apple juice when waking up in the morning. Thanks to that, he has good bowel habits. There is no constipation and minor diarrhea if he drinks caffeinated beverages... (Omitted).]

It was at the level of a stalker.

“How did you investigate all of this?”

“My core talent is in management. I have my ways.”

There was a time when excessive control of employees in the Myeongsong Group had become an issue. Ian said casually. “You don’t have to investigate further.”

“Yes, it is already enough... Huh?”

Ji Hayeon’s eyes opened wide at his words.

“You’ve clearly done enough so stop.”

“Ah, that...”

“I don’t like people who lie.”

“That...” Ji Hayeon dropped her head. “Yes...”

Ji Hayeon twisted her fingers as she watched Ian. Ian smiled and turned to the next document.

“Gordon? Who is that?”

There was nothing unusual about him. The only thing recorded was that he used to be a follower of Yoo Jaehan and disappeared as well. Of course, Ian was familiar with the name, ‘Gordon’.

It was the man he met at Chesswood. The man who seemed to know the truth of Elder Lord. Ian headed to the Temple of the Fallen God and met the grey god because of him. Ian seemed to be related to him somehow, but he couldn’t infer anything from the information.

“Well, it is a common name.”

In the end, there were no results. However, there was a phrase at the end of the investigation into Yoo Jaehan.

[Due to his sharpened senses, this can't proceed any further.]

“What does that mean?”

“Exactly what it says. The investigator was hiding, but Yoo Jaehan kept on looking back while walking as if he was seeing a ghost. He found the follower and threatened him...”

“Since when?”

“Well... since he envisioned Albino and submitted the Elder Lord project.”

“Really?”

Ian knew the truth about Elder Lord so he found it hard to say anything else. In particular, the expression ‘sharpened senses’ grabbed his attention. The being that made this game was a mysterious existence called a god.

After passing into the world of Elder Lord, the players could strengthen their skills and physical abilities. Ian was able to detect a falling leaf in the distance when he was Crockta. As a being that affected reality, maybe that power was given to Yoo Jaehan. At that time, was Yoo Jaehan seeing the gray god?

“Are you going to keep sitting here?”

“Then?”

“Let's go to eat. You've already finished your mint chocolate. Ah right, is it tasty?” Ji Hayeon quickly spoke again before Ian could decline. “I'll tell you one more thing if you eat with me.”

“.....”

“It is really confidential but I can tell Oppa. It is okay if you don't want to. It is a real secret.”

Ian nodded. "It is better if you originally gave me the confidential information."

"Ah, wait a minute."

"Let's go."

"Really? You will dine with me?"

"You don't want to?"

"No!"

They got up from their seats, with Ji Hayeon following behind Ian as they both disappeared out of the cafe.

The secretary watching Ji Hayeon from afar smiled as he stood with the bodyguards.

"Young Lady, that expression... huhuhu, it is refreshing."

He had been by her side for a long time, but she was never the same as other young people. In the first place, there was no opportunity to form close relationships due to the reputation of the Myeongsong Group.

She always looked sad. But now he finally witnessed her youth.

"However..." His eyes twitched. "The other person is that young man."

When Ji Hayeon had been kidnapped in the past, a bloody wind had blown through the Myeongsong Group. At that time, anybody involved had been demoted or fired. Just as they thought there were no more methods, a confidential special forces unit from the United States ended the situation.

They contacted Chairman Ji Eunchul first. The United States demanded various interests and investments in return for saving Ji Hayeon. Ji Eunchul accepted the conditions on the premise that his beloved daughter Ji Hayeon was saved, and the situation ended in less than a day.

The special forces unit trained soldiers from different countries and sent them to the most dangerous places. It was a secret unit hidden under the highest level of security, where the failure of a mission wouldn't even be acknowledged.

It was them. Among this group, there was a notorious young man known as Raven. His every action would be like a gore movie.

“How interesting.”

The secretary already obtained enough information about Raven, no, Jung Ian. Jung Ian was plunged into a firing line for his sister and his heart wasn't bad. An interesting young man.

The secretary spoke into his phone, “Yes. It's me. Deliver the instructions.”

Of course, his work was to protect Ji Hayeon. He must not allow anything risky around her. The secretary's eyes shone fiercely.

Jung Ian.

“The Young Lady is going to eat. It seems like a normal Korean restaurant. You know that she doesn't like fish, right? Warn the chef about all the usual things and if he interrupts even a little bit, he will die. Prepare all the dishes with the utmost care. Book out all the rooms next to them so that they are empty. Add mint chocolate to the desserts. It seems like the other person's favorite.”

Young Lady, good luck!



Ian aimed the muzzle. He adjusted the scale. He slowed down his breathing. His whole body stilled as he pulled the trigger lightly, like a drop of water falling on a lake. Just like ripples on a tranquil lake, it pierced the center of the goal.

His fingertips shook.

Tung!

The BB bullet flew and hit the doll.

Bidul!

But it wasn't strong enough as the doll sprang back up. This was the 'magic goblin' doll that attracted the attention of the people. It was featured in Elder Lord broadcasts and

received attention because of its unique actions.

Ian continued to fail to hunt it.

“I thought you were good at shooting guns.” Yiyu said from beside him. “It is very disappointing.”

“.....”

Ian wanted to plead that the doll’s actions were abnormal, but he remained silent. He didn’t like excuses. He would just attack until he succeeded. He aimed the BB gun at the lower body of the doll, where it was in contact with the floor. He continued shooting the same area. The magic goblin doll shook with every BB bullet until it eventually crashed to the ground.

“.....!”

The look of the owner of the magic goblin doll changed.

“This is pretty good.” Ian said with a grin. The owner looked between Ian and the doll before handing them the doll.

His expression was still disbelieving as he asked, “How did you do it?”

He didn’t try to hide it now. Ian replied.

“One point shooting!”

A strategy that focused on one point. The owner nodded with admiration.

“Indeed!”

Ian laughed. Then they leisurely left the firing range with the magic goblin doll. They blended into the crowds on the street.

“What, aren’t you going to give it to me?” Yiyu asked.

“Why should I give it?”

“Didn’t you play to give it to me?”

“No.”

“Wow.”

Yiyu hit Ian’s arm. Ian laughed and gave up the magic goblin doll. It was moderately large so Yiyu had to widen her arms to hug it. She took pleasure in pulling the ear of the goblin doll.

“What did you talk about earlier?” Yiyu asked.

“What?”

“Didn’t you eat with that pretty Unni?”

“Ahh.”

Ian recalled it. The information she gave him at the dinner table was truly unexpected. It wasn’t about Albino or Yoo Jaehan. It was a rumor about drugs and illegal capsules.



The skills in Elder Lord were basically determined by assimilation rate. Therefore, various methods of increasing the assimilation had been studied, as well as ways of immersing the user directly into the game.

One of them was drugs. Using drugs, the user’s body was put into a dormant state while the consciousness remained. Their minds left their flesh and they could connect more strongly to the world of Elder Lord.

In other words, the assimilation rate was much higher than ordinary users. But understandably, it was illegal. There were side effects and risks.

However, Elder Saga Corporation reported that some users were taking advantage of the drug to benefit from Elder Lord. In order to do this, the capsules were illegally modified to provide nutrients so that the user’s body wouldn’t die. The users would live in Elder Lord without having to break free.

The assimilation rate naturally increased and they could become high-level users, but it wasn’t known what side effects would occur from the continuous medication.

“Why would they go so far?” Ian asked, causing Ji Hayeon to reply with a smile.

“Money is at stake.”

Ian was forced to shut his mouth. He also plunged onto the battlefield for the sake of money.

No exact evidence had been found, but the Myeongsong Group was working directly with the government to investigate. In particular, it was said that there were bad people who forced users to sign a loan contract, with the user’s mind being stuck in Elder Lord until the loan was collected.

“Oppa, don’t you play Elder Lord as well? Please be careful. Don’t fall too far.”



“Oppa?” Yiyu called out to him.

“Huh?”

“What are you thinking about? Are you thinking about that Unni?”

“That’s right, but why does Yiyu care?”

“Hrm.”

Ian shook my head. It wasn’t the time to be thinking about this. It had been a while since he spent time with his sister, so he should focus on her.

“Look.” Yiyu grabbed Ian’s hand and pointed to the screen.

“Ah, that?”

“What do you think?”

“Of course...”

A recent hot topic video was being played. Ian was familiar and unfamiliar with the star.

White Knight Andre.

–As a defender of justice, I would like to make an important announcement today.

He looked into the screen and laughed.

–I declare that ‘Crockta’ is an enemy using the mask of justice to disturb the world of Elder Lord.

There were dead bandits behind Andre. He pointed behind him.

–From today onwards, I will immediately begin hunting him.

He lifted his long sword.

–This sword will make the decision. I will no longer let ladies shake because of the scary orc.

It was the video Andre recently uploaded where he declared war against Crockta. Due to this, the Elder Lord community was once again divided.

A man passing by Ian and Yiyu muttered, “Crazy bastard.”

Then the girl following him exclaimed, “So cool.”

There were conflicting reactions. Ian suddenly met Yiyu’s eyes. They shrugged and turned around simultaneously. Then they said at the same time.

“Crazy bastard.”

“So cool.”

CHAPTER 144

DIRTY SOUTH (1)

Crockta gave a warm farewell to Maillard and the Rehabilitation Brothers.

Edgar had committed suicide and disconnected, but there was no news about him showing up in Maillard again. Other Heaven and Earth members gradually reappeared but Edgar never showed up.

According to Robina, while he hadn't been an excellent user, his skills grew quickly after he entered the Heaven and Earth Clan.

The words that Ji Hayeon said to him earlier popped into his head. There were people who used illegally modified capsules and drugs to increase the assimilation rate and gain profits. The awakening of the drugged person would also usually depend on the contract.

Edgar might be in such a situation. But Crockta had no way to get in touch with him and had to leave Maillard.

It was the true south now.

"Thanks to Crockta, I was treated well." Anor laughed.

"You are quite good *dot*. You are so popular in Maillard... of course, I am very popular in Quantas *dot*."

Crockta was an icon for the users, so the accompanying Anor and Tiyo were treated very well.

"I miss the caruks."

"When the time comes, we will see them again *dot*."

It was possible to move faster by taking horses instead of caruks. The caruks were left to the Rehabilitation Brothers. The caruks, who had great advantages in the desert area, weren't useful in the continent. In the Rehabilitation Brothers, they were taken

care of as 'Crockta's mount.'

"This is the first time I am going to the south *dot*."

"How come?"

"It is the land of humans."

There are many humans in the south. The northwest of the continent was a harsh place where orcs and creatures lived, while the northeast was the land of the elves, dark elves and gnomes. The south of the continent was where humans lived together.

It was the most populated, fiercest and disruptive land, the south. In particular, the center of the continent contained many species due to its geographic location, meaning there were occasional fights among species.

They had to pass through it to arrive in the south. Tiyo wanted to meet his father Hedor while Crockta was trying to completely eliminate the remnants of the Thawing Balhae Clan, who had joined the Heaven and Earth Clan.

And Anor had no thoughts. "What does the food in the south taste like? Won't there be an abundance of hot and fat foods? Many fruits as well. Hahaha." He chuckled from aboard his horse. "Look. There are many new creatures on the continent!"

Anor stretched out his hand and bones started to rise. It was a strange bipedal creature.

"Lay it down again *dot*!"

"Why? The bones are fresh as it just died."

"It is unsightly *dot*."

"This is discrimination. Tiyo will be like this when you die."

"....."

Tiyo fired General at the bones. The bones were smashed to pieces.

"Ah! My bones!"

“The dead have no words.”

“Too much...”

Crockta smiled as he watched them, but he soon fixed his expression. He started to feel something from the forest they were riding through. There were presences moving here and there simultaneously. The movements were too sudden for them to be people passing by.

As they rode along the path, the video of White Knight Andre, no Baek Hanho popped into his head. He annihilated all the bandits and declared war against Crockta.

That’s right. Bandits!

“It is started once again. Kulkul.” Crockta laughed as he turned to Tiyo and Anor. “Shall we take a break?”

“That’s right. IT has been a while. I want to rest. Isn’t it hard?” Anor replied while patting his horse’s mane.

Tiyo smiled at Crockta. “I don’t think I should sweat before resting *dot*.”

“If you sweat from this then you are weak.”

“I won’t sweat *dot*.”

At that moment, Tiyo twisted his body and fired General. A bandit hiding behind a tree was hit by General and flew in the air. He bumped into another tree and fell to the ground with a groan.

“Bandits can only make me sweat a little around my eyes *dot*!”

Tiyo had already noticed the approach of the bandits.

“Cover everything!”

At Tiyo’s attack, the bandits jumped out and rushed towards them. Anor, who had no idea what was going on, screamed and hid behind Crockta and Tiyo.

“They are gnats *dot*.”

Crockta got off his horse while Tiyo showed brilliant marksmanship while holding the reins of his horse.

“Iyat! Iyat! Kiyoooh!”

Chong! Chong! Chong! Tiyo’s magic bullets accurately knocked down the bandits approaching.

Crockta also wielded his greatsword. However, he hesitated and didn’t attack anymore.

“.....!”

The enemies’ weapons were terrible. Some of them were stepping awkwardly while holding farm equipment. Some held swords or spears, but their eyes were terrified.

The man in the front exclaimed. “I-I-If you leave what you have, w-we won’t kill you!”

It was a pathetic voice. He realized they weren’t a match after seeing their companions knocked down because of Tiyo, but he spoke the threat because there was no room to back off.

“I only have this.” Crockta pointed his greatsword.

There was no need to fight. Tiyo also stopped firing General.

“What *dot*? Sorry I hit you *dot*.”

“These bandits have no killing intent. They are bandits but...”

As the clouds moved, bright sunshine fell in the forest. The shadows of the forest were removed, revealing Crockta’s form.

The bandits were stunned. A huge size and rugged face. The fearsome greatsword. The opponent was much more vicious than they imagined. Crockta looked at them without saying anything. The bandits stepped back at his gaze. The tattoos covering the body and the terrible belt at his waist made him seem like a demon.

The person in the lead bowed first.

“W-We’re really sorry!”

The other bandits identified the situation and also bowed while begging for mercy.

“We’re sorry!”

“Spare us!”

“It is hard to eat and live!”

Bowing to the overwhelming enemy!

Tiyo hit Crockta’s waist. “Smile a bit *dot.*”

“.....”

Tiyo had a point. He didn’t look so scary when smiling. A nasty person wouldn’t smile.

Crockta smiled at them and said. “Stand up.”

The reaction was explosive.

“Hiik! We’re sorry! Spare us!”

“My wife and children are waiting for me!”

“Sir Orc! Mercy!”

Crockta glanced at Tiyo. He shrugged and immediately changed his words.

“You should’ve left it as before. Look the way you want *dot.*”

“.....”

Anor came forward and helped them up. “Phew. Stand up. This person looks like a serial killer but he isn’t bad. Stand up. It’s okay.”

He was wearing a dark robe, but as soon as the dark elf Anor appeared, they started to recover.

“Pff. Anyway, life is unfair *dot*. Pffft.”

Tiyo giggled.

Crockta muttered, “... Kid.”

“W-What did you say *dot*?! Say it to me!”

“I didn’t say anything.”

“Don’t lie *dot*! You called me a kid *dot*!”

“You heard wrong.”

“Eek!”

Tiyo jumped and clung to Crockta. He tried to place Crockta in a headlock, but he just looked like a child hanging on.

“What are you doing now? These kids.” Anor muttered as he stared at them. “Is this the right time?”

“T-Then?”

“Listen to these people’s stories! Go and talk to them!”

“Um...”

There weren’t many bandits in this area, which was the north of the continent. It was so peaceful that people hardly ever turned to the criminal path. But this happened as soon as they headed south. The south might be different from the continent that they had experienced.

“I’ll do that.”

Crockta completely recognized Elder Lord as a real world. In the world of Elder Lord, he had power. In other words, a Hero. With great power comes great responsibility, so he wanted to help people who were in need. He should find out their circumstances.

The bandits’ eyes widened.



They were residents of a small village in the forest. They didn't have much, but it was still a life of freedom. Then one day, an existence appeared that took all of that away from them.

Knights.

"They told us to follow the Emperor."

"Emperor?"

"Yes." One bandit said. He was their leader called Hans. "As you know, there is no emperor on the continent. It is an unwritten rule. The advent of an emperor had always led to the persecution of other species."

"But someone is calling himself an emperor?"

"Yes. The knights are gathering villagers and farmers like us under the emperor's name. They speak nice words but we will be serfs. It is no different from slavery. So we refused."

Once they refused, the knights turned like they had been waiting and devastated the village. Anyone who rebelled was killed. In the end, they had nothing left and become bandits attacking adventurers and merchants in order to survive. However, their combat power was weak so they were often defeated.

"It is our fault but our children are starving... sorry."

"You don't need to apologize."

Crockta's group reached their home. The elderly, women, and children poked their heads out from tents in the forest. They looked frightened at the sudden appearance of a heinous orc.

"Umm..."

All of them were starving and their ribs poked out from underneath their skin. In particular, the children's conditions were serious.

Hans sighed, “We are eating fruit in the forest and hunting, but...”

Tiyo clicked his tongue.

“What are these knights doing *dot*? The emperor of where?”

“The king of Esperanza.”

“The king had a change of heart...”

In the case of orcs, each city was operated independently. The elves were similar to orcs, but they were weakly connected by the world tree. Gnomes regularly voted for their representative.

In the case of humans, there were royalty and nobles. However, the king’s power wasn’t strong and he was mainly regarded as a symbolic entity representing the nobles. Something seemed to have changed.

The advent of an emperor would shake the entire continent.

“It is unknown if the other species know about this.”

“If he does this, they will probably find out *dot*. But this is serious *dot*.”

Anor’s ears pricked, “The emperor... is he like the orc’s great chieftain?”

“Yes *dot*.”

“Then do we have to worry? Don’t we have the great chieftain here?”

“Ah! That’s right *dot*! The great chieftain... oof!”

Tiyo and Anor tried to tease Crockta again. Crockta quickly blocked their mouths and said, “Anyway, this is a pitiful situation... I want to help.”

“How *dot*?”

“This much...”

Crockta looked at the residents. There weren’t many of them because they were

originally a village. The Rehabilitation Brothers could afford this number. Besides, the Rehabilitation Brothers were formed for the purpose of helping others. They would also listen if Crockta asked them to do it.

Crockta told them, "Go to Maillard."

"Huh? Maillard?" Hans questioned. He became even more polite after hearing the name Crockta.

"There are people in Maillard who will help you out."

"Do you mean us?" Who...?"

"My friends are known as the Rehabilitation Brothers."

"Rehabilitation Brothers?"

Hans was dubious. "But Maillard isn't close. It won't be easy to reach there..."

They had to worry about the daily meals. Crockta shook his head as if telling them not to worry.

"Here."

Crockta pulled out some gold coins. He had become a top ranked player while playing the game and could afford at least this much.

"This...!"

Hans's eyes widened. For ordinary people, gold coins were worth a huge amount of money. Crockta pulled out several, not just one, and placed them in Hans' hands.

"Why is this...?"

He didn't put away the gold coins on his palm as he stared blankly at Crockta. Crockta scratched his nose and shrugged.

"A warrior shouldn't turn a blind eye to those in distress."

".....!"

“Just take it. The gold coins are just shining stones to me. I can spare a few stones if it saves you from starving!”

Hans was thrilled. “Ahh... please forgive me for taking this. Crockta!”

“Don’t do that.”

“I wouldn’t be willing if it wasn’t for the children! Thank you!”

Crockta raised him up. As the two were talking, the villagers started to falter.

Tiyo was the first one to notice.

“.....?”

Tiyo suddenly felt horseshoes approaching. The village residents were terrified when they looked to one side. He followed their gaze to see a group of humans. The humans were mounted and in full-body armor. They held lances and swords.

Knights.

“Now, are you willing to follow the emperor?”

CHAPTER 145

DIRTY SOUTH (2)

The appearance of the knights in the iron armor was imposing. It was hard to see so many fully armed people in the land of other tribes. They never bowed their heads. They were arrogant people who looked down at the villagers like they were dirty from their horses.

“His Majesty is merciful. You have another chance.”

The villagers recalled the past and shivered with fear. As nobody answered, a knight came forward and pulled out his sword. The sunlight falling through the dense trees reflected off the blade, causing a dazzling flash.

“All you dumb people! Answer!”

The villagers were hesitant and resigned. Their eyes were focused on the blades of the knights.

These swords. Their homes had been trampled and the family was killed by these swords. They would be forced by those swords to follow the emperor. The obvious way was to follow the emperor. In the end, they would become serfs and sacrifice their lives. No, the emperor would recruit them for a war that they didn’t want to participate in.

The emperor was such a person.

“.....!”

Hans shook from behind Crockta’s back. He took deep breaths. He held the gold coins he received from Crockta, hesitated for a moment before grasping Crockta’s hand. Crockta accepted his hasty gesture.

Hans whispered. “Run away!”

“.....”

He headed towards the knights without looking back. He was the representative of this place.

"I will be happy to answer. Sir Knight."

He bowed his head in front of the knights. The knight's blade descended towards Hans' head.

"Go ahead."

"We are..."

"Before you say it..." The knight interrupted Hans' words and laughed. "Look at the people around you and think about it."

Hans closed his mouth and looked back. The eyes of all the villagers were facing him. The wrinkled eyes of the elderly, the nervous faces of the youths, the frightened women and the infants sleeping without knowing anything.

Hans closed his eyes, took a deep breath and spoke again. "I live in a small village and don't know anything about the world, like you knights..."

The blade fell to the top of his head. Hans stopped breathing.

"...After the knights came, we moved to the forest to become bandits. We tried to hunt and fight, but were often defeated."

"You speak too much."

"...We are just normal people. If the knights point swords at us then we can only follow. It is better than dying. But that is what I'm saying."

Hans raised his head. The sun reflected off the helmet but he stared directly at knight's face. It was the face of a young man. Hans spoke.

"We also know what the Emperor is like. We aren't people who fit your world. Can't you just let us go?"

There was an earnest appeal in Hans' eyes. The knight nodded. "I see. I heard it well."

Hans bowed his head again. The knights glanced at each other. After a short exchange of opinions, the knight opened his mouth.

“People not from His Majesty’s world...” The knights pulled out their swords. “Then you should go to a world that suits you.”

The village residents shrieked. The first target was Hans. The sword descended towards him.

Kakang!

Then there was the sound of weapons hitting each other.

“.....!”

The knight was stunned. Something was blocking him. It was a gigantic greatsword that couldn’t be lifted even if he tried.

“Bul’tar. You don’t deserve the name of a knight.”

The ferocious orc moved the greatsword and the knight staggered. He was strangely covered in tattoos. His body emitted a terrifying killing intent.

“Who are you?”

The knights were hesitant. They instinctively felt that this orc wasn’t easy. Crockta pushed the puzzled Hans back before firmly replying, “My name is Crockta.”

“.....!”

Crockta, a name they had heard somewhere before. It was a name that all the gods whispered in the temples. A northern hero who conquered the north and stopped the great chieftain.

Northern Conqueror. But the only thing known about him was the name Crockta and that he was an orc. It was hard to believe that he was Crockta.

The knights snorted, “Where did you hear that?”

They thought that he was just borrowing the name of Crockta. Crockta placed the

greatsword on his shoulder and declared, “If you are really a knight, there should be oaths that you made when you became one.”

Chivalry wasn’t that different in the world of Elder Lord. They pledged to defend the knight’s oath. It wasn’t that different from the warriors’ law that Crockta received.

“Do you remember?”

The knights’ faces distorted. “What Crockta nonsense? Garbage orc bastard. Everyone attack!”

“Yes!” They shouted as the horses started running.

At that moment, Crockta roared and kicked off from the ground.

“Bul’tarrrrrrrrrrr————!”

A shout like thunder! At the same time, Crockta’s energy exploded. The horses were shocked and turned like something was blocking the front.

“Whoa! Whoa!”

“What is going on?”

The knight in the lead called out. The orc looked like a giant, no huge monster in front of the horses. He was actually like that. His killing intent shot into the sky.

The knights started sweating. The horse’s eye level was much higher, but it seemed like the orc was looking down at them from a huge height. The greatsword seemed like it could break a mountain. The pressure was huge.

Was this orc really that person? The orc Crockta, who killed the great chieftain and conquered the north alone! Did he come to the south after leaving the north?

“Tell me.” Crockta gazed at them with fierce eyes. “What was your oath?”

“.....!”

The illusion of a giant orc crushed them.

“Did you swear to persecute the weak? Is that the type of knight you are?”

“Something like this...!”

“Or did you want to swear an oath now?”

Crockta’s killing intent tied up their bodies. A knight feared the crisis and aimed his sword at Crockta.

“Shut upppp!”

His body filled with strength. He wasn’t an ordinary soldier. At the end of hard training, he was a man who received the title of a knight. The knight who was after Crockta’s life laughed wildly and got off his horse.

“Chivalry? Puhahat, what nonsense.”

He realized that he shouldn’t rely on horses to deal with this orc. The horse was unable to charge because of the opponent’s fierce killing intent. He could feel that his horse was shivering.

“Everyone get off your horses and deal with this orc. He is someone who can’t be ignored.”

Crockta was calm. He was familiar with one-to-many fights. The knights started to surround Crockta.

“Chivalry? An orc shouldn’t say something so funny. But I will give an answer.” The knight talking to Crockta laughed. They were knights. No matter how strong this orc was, he would never be able to win against so many knights.

He shouted, “I said to protect the weak, fight injustice and do justice. But what good is that? Anyway, strength is the only thing that matters in this world. You will die today! Kuhahat!”

The blades of many knights headed to Crockta.

“The emperor is more important to us than the oath! For His Majesty!”

“For His Majesty!”

The knights aimed for Crockta. It was a forest of swords with no place to avoid.

Ogre Slayer moved.

“You forgot your shame and are speaking so unabashedly.”

Kang!

Kang!

Kang kang kang kang kang!

Kaaaang!

At that moment, Ogre Slayer hit dozens of blades at the same time. The swords of the knights bounced back. The knights retreated from the tremendous shock. They couldn't comprehend the situation.

What just happened? Only one sword had blocked their swords at the same time. The attacks were all from different angles. But the sword had met dozens of blades at once.

Crockta opened his mouth. “Destroy the covenant.”

“What?”

“The burden on your back!” Crockta lowered his posture. His lower body contracted. “It will be the cause of your death.”

Crockta exploded forward. The knights raised their swords but Ogre Slayer penetrated through the gap. The broken bodies and blades flew through the air. A fountain of blood followed. Crockta laughed as his sword pierced a stomach. “If you wonder why the emperor will die, this is your answer.”

“.....!”

The knights' morale was broken after suffering from his explosive strikes. The formation was broken. Crockta didn't miss this chance as he dug into the knights' encirclement and broke it further.

“Kuaaaak!”

“Aaaah!”

Terrible screams were heard. The horses were watching their masters be slaughtered with frightened eyes. The sight of blood spouting and the greatsword separating the body was reflected in their big eyes.

Ogre Slayer sank into the belly of a knight who resisted. The situation was over. The knights were scattered all over the place, making it impossible to tell which body and head went together.

Crockta kicked a head at his feet while walking towards the one remaining knight. The knight fell to the ground and shivered while moving backward.

““M-Monster...!”

“Monster?” Crockta kicked him. The knight fell back on the ground. “You are the monster.”

“.....!”

“It isn’t just here. How many villages did you destroy?”

When he didn’t answer, Crockta placed the greatsword against his neck. The knight hurriedly opened his mouth.

“W-We didn’t kill everything. According to orders, we didn’t kill...”

“So how many did you kill?”

“.....”

The knight moved his mouth but couldn’t speak.

“Ohh...” He suddenly fell face-down in the dirt. “P-Please spare me.”

He spoke as his forehead touched the floor. It was a subservient appearance.

“It can’t be helped since I just followed the emperor. Please spare me. I worked my whole life to become a knight. My dream just barely came true so I can’t die like this... please forgive me once!”

“.....”

Crockta couldn't answer. The knight became still but slowly looked up when there was no answer.

“...Ah?”

But the greatsword was right before his nose. The greatsword moved.

Kwajik!

“Kuaaaaak!”

The knight's right hand was severed. The severed limb rolled across the ground. The bleeding continued. Crockta tore clothing from a dead knight's body and threw it at him.

“Tell the one you call the emperor.”

The knight covered his wrist with the cloth before wriggling to retrieve the hand that had been cut off. If he went quickly then he could reattach it. Crockta kicked the severed hand away. The knight felt despair.

“I am Crockta, the one who killed the crazy chieftain. He who has killed innocents and cast the world into darkness for his own sake.”

Crockta grabbed the knight's neck and raised him. Then he placed the knight on top of a horse. The horse trembled lightly. Crockta whispered in the ear of the knight.

“Let the emperor know that his fate can be the same.”



Crockta's party left Hans' village. After witnessing Crockta's ruthlessness, Hans and the villagers worshiped Crockta like he was a god. Crockta gave them money and sent them to the Rehabilitation Brothers in Maillard. He wrote a letter asking them to be looked after.

Hans and the villagers bowed in thanks before leaving immediately. It was because the emperor might dispatch more men if they stayed there. Maillard, the area of the elves,

was beyond the emperor's touch.

"The south is a little strange *dot*." Tiyo said.

They were now riding the horses that used to belong to the knights. After seeing their masters die because of Crockta, the horses started following them in earnest. The rest of the horses were given to the villagers.

"Humans are the strange ones."

It seemed like hierarchy still remained in the southern part of the continent.

"Even so *dot*... Look, isn't that strange *dot*?"

Tiyo pointed in front of him. Crockta looked forward. Then he slowly opened his mouth.

"What is that?"

"I don't know *dot*."

"Isn't it a knight?"

"What are you saying *dot*?"

As Anor said, it was a knight. But it was different from the knights they met before.

"Help me! I am a knight! Save me!"

Someone was running on all fours. And there were bandits chasing him.

"You can't run away! Give us everything you have, Knight!"

"Nooooooooo!"

The knight's eyes shone as he saw Crockta. Then he started to run towards them.

"Orc Brother! Hey, Orc Brother! I am a knight so can you help me? Orc Brother!"

"Crazy!"

CHAPTER 146

DIRTY SOUTH (3)

The questionable knight headed towards Crockta.

“.....!”

The bandits and Crockta’s party faced each other with the knight in the middle.

“The south is truly strange *dot*. Knights attacking bandits, and this time the knight is being chased *dot*.”

“Gnome Brother! Save me!”

“Who is your brother *dot*?”

The bandits flinched as they saw Crockta’s ugly face. The leader looked behind him. Bandits were still rushing over. Once there were enough of them, the bandits looked at Crockta with confidence.

“Orc and Gnome! Give that knight to us!”

They raised their weapons as the leader spoke with a threatening manner and voice. They were different from the villagers, as they looked like real bandits.

“Tell me what is your relationship to each other.”

“Tell you?” The bandits burst out laughing. “The orc isn’t scared! He dares to speak to me, the Mountain King Nodun!”

The bandits behind him also laughed.

“Hey! Knight! Both that orc and gnome are going to die because of you!”

“You aren’t a knight but a grim reaper! Kelkelkel!”

“Get along well! Kekeke!”

The bandits taunted the knight's as tears welled up in his eyes.

"Orc Brother, you have a big sword so please lend me your strength..."

However, the knight seemed to become desperate as he saw that the number of bandits kept on increasing. The number of followers of the self-proclaimed Mountain King Nodun continued to grow, and there now seemed to be several dozens. Unlike the other bandits, they were equipped with proper weapons and armor. Archers were aiming bows at them from the rear.

Real bandits. While Crockta could easily handle them, they were at a level that couldn't be matched by an ordinary warrior.

The knight frowned before bowing his head and sighing. "Hoo. It is only up to here. It is a shame."

The knight raised his head. He grabbed the long sword hanging from his waist. He placed the handle and guard section in front of his forehead and whispered.

"The Alaste Knights live without regrets and die while laughing."

The trembling voice slowly calmed down. He looked at Crockta and said, "Orc Brother, I'm sorry. Run away."

"What about you?"

"Out of fear for my life, I have shamefully placed you in danger. I will endure as long as possible. I apologize for the inconvenience."

He stepped forward and took a stance. Mountain King Nodun laughed and raised his axe in response. "Now you want to come out and pretend to be a hero?"

"Do I look like a hero?" The knight rushed forward. "I am an ordinary knight, bastards!"

It wasn't seen when he was running away, but his movements when charging into battle were quite good. There was no contest if he was fighting Nodun one-on-one. The knight pierced through any gaps with brilliant movements and predictions as he aimed at Nodun.

Nodun faced the knight with his axe but he eventually retreated. The difference in skill was remarkable. Nodun immediately called for his fellow bandits.

“Guys! Catch this guy!”

“Yes!”

“Let’s go!”

The bandits stampeded forward. The knight stepped back as if he expected it and cut the person who approached him first before shouting, “I am Knight Vigo of Alaste!”

The knight was remarkably brave when dealing with the bandits alone.

He gave Crockta a good impression. “That guy is different from the fake knights.”

Suddenly, the axe of a bandit aimed towards Vigo’s back. A crisis situation! At that moment, a light flashed.

Puoong!

Tiyo’s magic bullet pierced through the air and hit the bandit. The bandit flew in the air. Tiyo’s artifact, General, was gradually becoming more destructive.

“Go Crockta, *dot!*”

“Bul’tar!”

Crockta got off his horse and joined the battlefield. He grabbed Vigo’s collar and threw him back, dealing with the bandits alone. Every time his greatsword swung, the enemies would be broken down. It was an overwhelming force, like a lion among sheep. No one could stop Crockta.

“W-What is this guy?” Nodun stepped back and ordered the archers to shoot.

“O-Our companions are there!”

“Shut up! Just shoot!”

“Yes, yep!”

The arrows fired without caring about the bandits hit as well. Crockta stopped the arrows with his greatsword.

“Ack!”

“...Cough!”

“Keooooook!”

The arrows just ended up reducing the people on the same side. The bandits hit by the arrows stared incredulously before dying. The pupils filled with grudges stared at Nodun.

“Uhhh... shit.” Nodun gritted his teeth and shouted, “Monster! Run away!”

“Retreat!”

“Retreat!”

The bandits started to run away. The speed at which they escaped was fast.

Crockta watched them and shrugged. “It isn’t worth chasing them.”

He smiled and turned around.

“Oh my god...!” Vigo’s eyes were shaken after witnessing the dance.

It was a short fight but it was enough to guess the orc’s level. Only a few knights were able to overcome such a huge difference in numbers. A one-sided slaughter was even rarer. Only a handful of knights, called masters, were capable of it.

The master knights all led a unit and were coveted talents in every city, the most important power. In addition, the orc’s skills seemed to be beyond a master. Maybe he was a grandmaster.

Grandmaster! A true legend that transcended a master! There was only one grandmaster in Alaste, where he came from.

Vigo was thrilled as he rushed up to Crockta.

“Orc Brother!

He hugged Crockta and shook his body to the left and right. It seemed like he was trying to lift Crockta, but Crockta was too heavy.

“I’m so lucky to meet Brother! Orc Brother! What is your name?” I’ll be your brother from now on! I love you!”

“.....”

Crockta couldn’t tell if this knight was good or shameless. Then the watching Tiyo came over.

“Kiiyok!”

“Keok!”

“What Crockta Brother *dot*? I am the one who saved your life, Tiyo from Quantas *dot*!”

“Ah, Gnome Brother. Hahahat! Brother! Vigo greets you!” He smiled and bowed deeply. “I am Knight Vigo of Alaste! It’s an honor to meet you today! Hahahahat!”

“We didn’t allow you to...”

“Crockta Brother! Tiyo Brother! Hahahat!” Then Vigo discovered the hiding Anor. “Hey! Are you their follower?”

“Huh?”

“I’m asking if you are their follower! A thin fellow like you...”

“Why is a bastard like you trying to convert me to a follower?”

“W-What...”

“You fuc... oof! Don’t stop me... this bas... oof oof!”

Crockta blocked his mouth. “This is Anor, a companion.”

Vigo nodded as he ignored Anor who kept trying to curse. “Ah... yes... Anor... Brother?”

“Be careful of his swearing.”

“I-I will be careful.”

“What type of scavenger... oof!”

Thus, they defeated the bandits and met a knight of Alaste.



Vigo stood up and shouted. “Brothers! Be Alaste’s strength!”

“.....!”

Vigo’s drunk voice resounded loudly in the pub. The eyes of those drinking gathered on him. Vigo noticed and carefully sat down. The eyes of the drunkards weren’t good.

“What, an Alaste bastard?”

“Get out of our neighborhood!”

“They will be crushed and will fall.”

The men occupying another table cried out. This was a kingdom of humans. After going south from Maillard, there was a wide forest and after that, they would see a human city. Other species were about to enter, but like Orcrox and Maillard, the humans were dominant and the rulers were also human. This was the first checkpoint city, ‘Reynolds’.

“What is a bastard from Alaste doing in Reynolds?”

“Be patient, patient.”

“Hey, my mood is bad now.”

They stared at Vigo with threatening eyes.

“Beat up that Alaste bastard.”

Vigo’s eyebrows twitched. He couldn’t endure the insults. At that moment, the door

opened.

“.....!”

Everyone’s breathing stopped.

An orc. As soon as the door opened and the horrible face entered the pub, all drunkards regained their spirits. It wasn’t a hangover remover. The pub became quiet as the large body with menacing tattoos and the greatsword entered the room.

Orcs rarely appeared in the south. In addition, it was rare to see such a vicious looking orc among the orcs. The orc looked around the pub with fierce eyes before sitting down at a table. It was the table with the person from Alaste.

“Crockta, you came *dot*.”

“Um. You are late.”

Crockta had stopped by the blacksmith to repair Ogre Slayer. A lot of blood covered it so it needed to be checked.

“But why do they call you a bastard from Alaste? They use that phrase for you *dot*.”

“Alaste?” Crockta looked around the eerily quiet pub. “It is quiet.”

There were no more voices mocking Alaste. Those who made the threatening remarks were now quietly sipping alcohol while staring at their table. After the silence caused by Crockta, Vigo shouted, “Hooray, Alaste!”

“.....”

Alaste was unique in the human territory because it was a city that declared itself completely neutral. In other words, it wasn’t under the reign of the king. It hadn’t been a problem when the king’s existence was just a symbol, but now it was a huge problem when the king declared himself an emperor. He demanded Alaste’s submission. The king’s policy had changed.

“The kingdom will soon become an empire. This isn’t just our problem. It is a continent-wide problem.”

“Hrmm.”

The great chieftain in the north, and an emperor in the south. Crazy people kept appearing.

“The world is becoming ridiculous.”

“That’s right. It is ridiculous.” Vigo lowered his voice as he said, “In fact, I think the guy called the Mountain King was chasing after me because of the emperor.”

“What do you mean?”

“He and his men suddenly appeared and occupied the area. They only attack people traveling to Alaste. So I was dispatched for reconnaissance, but my companion was caught.”

“Your companion?”

“My companion...” Vigo paused. “My companion is... a brave Alaste knight who is now gone.”

“I’m sorry. It is a shame.”

“...No. Anyway, those bandits use axes but their movements are definitely trained. In particular, they use the swordsmanship of the kingdom. It is obvious. It doesn’t make sense that those guys are just bandits. They must be soldiers assigned here.”

Vigo thought that the kingdom deliberately created bandits in order to harass Alaste.

“Alaste’s future is dark, but I saw hope today, brother!”

“.....”

“Help Alaste!”

Crockta looked at Tiyo, who just shrugged.

“Let’s listen a bit more *dot*.”

Anor didn’t speak as he quietly sipped his drink. His hood was down so the females in

the pub were also looking at him with strange eyes. He was too handsome.

“How can we help? Do we have to spend our whole lives in Alaste? That is impossible.”

“That’s not it.” Vigo took another gulp of his beer before thumping the glass against the body. Then he said. “Compared to the kingdom, Alaste is weak. It is obvious. Everyone knows this. So the king calling himself the emperor took mercy on us and made a proposal.”

A one-on-one fight between the most powerful person in Alaste and the kingdom! A proxy war with the best knights! If Alaste won, the kingdom would leave them alone. If the kingdom won, Alaste would join the kingdom.

“Once the king places Alaste and other cities under his control, he will change his title to Emperor and start earnestly creating an empire. Most places have already joined and among the few remaining cities, our Alaste is especially symbolic. It is the biggest situation.”

“Um...”

“You might’ve guessed already. The kingdom is full of tremendous knights. In particular, Grandmaster Paklinche is an unbeatable knight who has never been defeated.”

“Paklinche?”

“Yes. He is Adandator Paklinche.”

“Does he have a relationship with Leyteno Paklinche?”

“...Ah... the traitor. You know him.”

Crockta’s eyebrows twitched.

Vigo raised both hands. “I don’t mean anything by it. Please understand.”

Leyteno Paklinche. The great warrior in the Hall of Fame, ‘Master of the Greatsword!’ He was why Crockta used the greatsword. A human who hated the false hypocrisy of humans and fought with the orcs against his fellow countrymen.

“Leyteno is a distant ancestor of Adandator Paklinche. A master of the family.”

“I see.”

“In any case, it is expected that he will come out in the proxy war. If he comes out, there is no knight in Alaste who can fight against him... ah!” Vigo’s eyes lit up. “I have Brother today! Please come out in the duel for Alaste!”

CHAPTER 147

GREAT DUEL (1)

“The emperor... one of them *dot*,” Tiyo muttered.

Crockta, who had been sleeping, listened to him.

“Either the king is crazy or the humans are *dot*.”

“Why?”

“A person can’t call himself an emperor unless he is crazy. If humans weren’t crazy, they would stop their king from calling himself an emperor *dot*.”

“I see.”

The status of emperor seemed to have special meaning in the world of Elder Lord. An emperor always appeared just before a great war between species would occur on the continent. The past war between humans and orcs that Leyteno Paklinche took part in also occurred because the humans had an emperor, and it stopped when the emperor died.

“Crockta.”

“Hmm?”

“Do you intend to fight in the proxy war?” Tiyo asked.

He thought about the words that Vigo, knight of Alaste, had said. It was a bit much to demand that Crockta help in a dangerous fight after they just met, but it was a sign of his urgency.

“I don’t know. I want to refuse but it seems to be that it will affect not only Alaste, but all of us.”

“Indeed *dot*. The dynamics of humans will cause the continent to fall into confusion.” The emperor stood for a military rule. Maybe the continent would be drawn into a

species war after a long period of peace. “Ah... there isn’t a single day of quiet on our trip *dot*.”

The great chieftain in the north and the emperor on the continent. There was trouble wherever they went.

“Crockta, there is a reason for everything that happens to us *dot*.”

“What a religious remark.”

“Bah. Meaning is an attribute that all species with intelligence have *dot*.”

Crockta chuckled in a low voice, “Anyway, the great chieftain in the north and now this place. It is better to think of it as a given mission *dot*.”

“Mission...”

Crockta closed his eyes. He was a soldier who once killed people. He killed people but he didn’t know whether the world’s suffering was reduced, or whether he only increased the pain. The scale of reality was complicated and difficult to measure.

Compared to that, the missions given to him in Elder Lord were simple. It was so simple that he couldn’t afford to not do it.

“I should do the mission.”

“Hoh. You will do it yourself *dot*?”

“I can’t ignore it.”

“Adandator? Isn’t he famous in the south *dot*? Can you win? Aren’t you shaking *dot*?”

Tiyo started to subtly mock him. Crockta snorted and replied, “Not at all.”

The moon shining through the open window cast a soft light on the bedside. Reynolds was quiet at night. The sound of footsteps could occasionally be heard, but it was mostly calm with only the sound of the wind entering their ears. Anor’s breathing was heard from close by as Tiyo and Crockta whispered to each other. The spirit of sleep was entering their brains, making them feel drowsy.

“If you go further down from Alaste, the sea will appear and there is a beautiful resort village. The name...” Crockta whispered.

Tiyo’s voice gradually softened. “Gridori *dot*.”

“Yes. Gridori...”

“You want to go there *dot*...?”

“After the work in Alaste... it would be nice to go there.”

“Okay *dot*. The sea, it has been a long time *dot*...”

“Do you know how to swim?”

“I am the seal of Quantas *dot*...”

“That is an exaggeration.”

“Huhu... I will show you *dot*. My butterfly...”

Both their voices gradually subsided.

“Maybe my father is resting there *dot*...”

“That would be nice.”

Then the two of them fell asleep.

In his dream, Crockta was in the ocean. He was standing on white sand and turned around when someone touched him from behind. Next to him were Han Yeor and Yoo Sooyeon. Then a beach ball flew at his head. There was a sound and he saw Tiyo and Anor laughing while pointing at him. He entered the sea with them.

It was a pleasant dream.



Crockta, Tiyo, and Anor woke up early. Tiyo forced his eyes open as they headed to the dining room on the first floor.

Vigo was sleepily eating breakfast with matted hair. “Oh, good morning Brother!” He smiled and raised his hand. He was still in a state where his eyes couldn’t open properly. “Breakfast is important in Alaste. Brothers should eat as well. I’ll buy.”

“Hoh. Really *dot*?”

“Yes. The food here isn’t bad. Landlord!”

The inn owner was dozing off at the counter. Crockta, Tiyo, and Anor ordered breakfast according to what they liked. Crockta ate a steak in the morning, Anor had a salad, and Tiyo ate a sandwich.

“Now, eat a lot since we have a long way to go. Isn’t that right?”

“.....”

“Let’s go to Alaste!” They were planning to go, but Vigo’s remark was so brazen that they didn’t feel like it. It was like there was no middle ground.

Tiyo shook his head. “Rather than Alaste, we are going to the kingdom.”

“I have the same thought.”

“The kingdom is a place where we can see many things *dot*.”

“Then let’s go quickly.”

“Brothers! Go!”

Anor frowned as he chewed on his salad.

“Phew, so noisy. Be quiet in the morning.”

“Yes...”

Vigo sat down at Anor’s scolding started to eat his breakfast again. The guests staying at the inn gradually started trickling downstairs. The dining room became filled with guests again. Those who were leaving this morning exited the door with their baggage.

“Isn’t there any knight in Alaste that can deal with Adandator *dot*?”

“There is one person, a grandmaster like Adandator.”

“Then why isn’t he *dot*?”

“He is old...”

Alaste’s grandmaster was an old, white-haired knight. His experience and skills were excellent but he was old, so many thought it was impossible for him to deal with Adandator. He was also hard at work training pupils.

“If you go to Alaste, you can see him once. Not only is his swordsmanship famous, he is known as the master of knights who trains other knights in the right way.”

“Hoh.”

“I am a knight because of him. Hahahat.” He laughed loudly. “Crockta is already strong enough, but I’m sure you can get stronger if you meet him. It is the same for the others as well.”

“Even if Anor is a necromancer *dot*?”

“That doesn’t matter. As I said, he is a special person. Magicians also learn from him.”
Vigo spoke enthusiastically

“Then when are we leaving *dot*?” Tiyo asked.

“Oh! You’ve decided!” Vigo jumped up.

Crockta laughed as he said, “I will go there and decide if I will fight or not. I want to look at the situation.”

“Hahat, that is enough. You’ll know when you come to Alaste. The reason why I want to protect Alaste.” Vigo shouted, “A drink over here! Give me a drink!”

“It is too early in the morning *dot*!”

“We have to go a long way and riding while drunk is the best! We have to celebrate you going to Alaste! Hahahat!”

The owner brought Vigo a beer as he requested. Crockta eventually followed him by

drinking a glass. The other guests became enthusiastic once they saw Crockta's group drinking in the daylight. It was a rampage in the daytime. Thus, they left the inn smelling of alcohol.



"Hah! Hah! Haah! Hut!"

The yells regularly rang out, "Bul'tarrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrr!"

A gigantic roar shook the training grounds.

"How are the warriors these days?"

"Not enough."

"It is like talking to Lenox."

This was the cradle of orc warriors, Orcrox. Orcs were training to become warriors. After the death of the great warrior Lenox, another warrior became the new instructor. Hoyt, Lenox's disciple and the one who mastered the hammer, undergoing many fights.

He had spent a long time recovering from his injury but after he recovered, he started enthusiastically teaching the orcs. Now the orcs who came to Orcrox learned from Hoyt, not Lenox.

"Do your best!"

"Yes!"

"Don't just shout! Wield your weapon! One more time! Think of it as the best strike of your life!"

"Understood!"

"This is your greatest attack! Do you want to bet your life?"

"No!"

“Then swing again!”

“Bul’tarrrr!”

Every time Hoyt shouted, the orcs’ momentum changed. They squeezed out more strength, surpassing their limits. Although he was originally a warrior, Hoyt wasn’t any less stringent than Lenox as an instructor.

“What brings you here? Tashaquil.”

The one who came to see him was the great shaman Tashaquil, the orc shaman instructor at Basque Village.

“I had a dream.”

“A dream.”

If any other orc had talked about their dream, Hoyt would’ve ignored it. But the other person was Tashaquil. The dream of a powerful shaman was like a prophecy in itself, as it contained a clue to the future. He wouldn’t come here because of an ordinary dream.

“What was the dream?”

“I saw a warrior.” Tashaquil smiled. “He is fighting to become a great warrior.”

“Who?”

“I won’t reveal it to others. It is unfair.”

“I can guess who.”

“Really? Well, I wonder...” He chuckled in a low voice.

“Fighting to become a great warrior...” Hoyt looked at his hammer on the ground. A masterpiece from Golden Anvil. The name of the hammer was ‘Mountain Slasher.’ As the name suggested, anyone hit by this hammer would die.

“It is very dangerous.”

“That is a warrior’s life. Die or become great.” Tashaquil chuckled. “So I came here. Give me that.”

He pointed to one side. Hoyt’s expression changed. This wasn’t something he could give to Tashaquil.

An old helmet. It was Lenox’s legacy, the steel helmet he had used. It was hanging from a bar on one side of the training grounds and watching the orcs, just like Lenox during his life.

“I can’t do that. It is Lenox’s.”

“He is gone. I will give it to someone who deserves it.”

“But that... it can’t be anything else?”

“Yes.”

“I’m reluctant to give...” The moment that Hoyt was about to refuse...

A blast of wind shot through Orcrox. It was strong enough to cause the sand scattered on the ground to rise. Hoyt and Tashaquil covered their faces with their hands.

“.....!”

An incredible thing happened. Lenox’s helmet was caught by the wind and fell off the bar to the ground. The steel helmet tumbled towards them. It was rare for heavy steel helmets to fly in the wind.

Tashaquil laughed. “Lenox seems to think he needs it.”

“.....”

Hoyt didn’t answer. It felt like Lenox’s response.

“Hoyt. Can I send it to the warrior who needs it?”

“Are you going to bring it directly to him?”

“I need to stay in Basque Village.”

“Then...”

Tashaquil whistled.

Something emerged. A huge shadow appeared.

Hoyt laughed at the sight. “King of the Forest.”

“Yes. This guy will bring the helmet.”

“Now I know for sure who the other person is.”

A giant tiger. He was 1.5 times bigger than a normal tiger. The ruler of Orcrox Forest, the one who created fear in the creatures of the forest! The tiger who was the king of the forest, Simba. The tiger Simba, who defeated the mutant wolf with Crockta, had now matured and reigned as king of the forest.

He became a friend of the orcs due to his relationship with Crockta, and came here following Tashaquil’s call.

“Simba.”

“Grrrung...”

“Give him this.” Tashaquil placed the helmet into a sack and tied it around Simba’s neck. Simba shook his head and stretched lightly. “Can you go?”

“Grrrrung!”

“Yes. Now go. There is no time.”

“Kuaang!”

Simba roared before turning around and running out of the training grounds. The orcs were aghast at the sudden emergence of a tiger.

Hoyt spoke in a despondent manner.

“The tiger and Lenox’s helmet. I wonder what type of dream you had.”

Tashaquil grinned. He shook his staff and blessed the warriors in the training ground. Some of them would give up and others would continue to walk this path until they eventually became warriors. Maybe one or two might become great warriors.

“The king of the humans is calling himself the emperor.”

“Yes. Humans always make the same mistakes.”

Tashaquil looked at the distant sky and said.

“He will soon meet a warrior.”

CHAPTER 148

GREAT DUEL (2)

They arrived at Alaste after two days. Outer walls surrounded the white city.

“This is Alaste. Isn’t it beautiful?”

The walls were gray while Alaste shone white like marble.

Crockta nodded. “Beautiful.”

“It is something Alaste has long been proud of. It is said that the white dragon Ariadne built it with magic. A legend.”

Thanks to Knight Vigo, they were smoothly granted access. The guards saluted Vigo. Vigo shook his head and pointed to Crockta. “Not this way! This brother will save Alaste so salute him!”

“He will help Alaste?”

“He is an incredible, strong orc warrior. I will recommend him for the kingdom duel!”

“Ohh! It is nice to meet you! Alaste!”

“Alaste!”

Their eyes lit up and they saluted Crockta. Normally people were afraid of orcs, but they actually felt admiration as they looked at Crockta’s scary face.

“Crockta Brother will scold Adandator!”

“Crockta! We believe in you!”

“That Adandator will be overthrown just looking at Crockta’s face!”

He didn’t know if it was praise or gossip but Crockta nodded. Vigo exchanged more well wishes with the guards before entering Alaste with Crockta.

Then the landscape of Alaste was revealed.

Anor responded first, "Whoa!"

Tiyo, who rarely admired the culture of other species, cried out in a small voice. "This is quite good *dot*."

Crockta smiled and remarked, "How great."

The inside of Alaste was a beautiful white. Although Arnin, the city of elves was white, Alaste was a pleasing blend of white and blue colors. It was just like a Mediterranean city.

Vigo puffed out his chest and proudly proclaimed, "We designed Alaste to be aesthetically pleasing. Hahaha. The urban landscape department and the citizens cooperated to avoid harming the beauty of this city. I've never seen a person who hasn't admired it."

He was filled with pride for the city's appearance. As Vigo appeared with three people of varied species, the citizens stared in wonder. However, unlike other cities, Crockta couldn't feel any fear towards orcs. Crockta realized it was because of Vigo being next to him.

"Hello, Mister Knight! Who is the orc uncle next to you?"

"He has come to help Alaste!"

"Wow! Thank you!"

The children smiled brightly and greeted Vigo. Everywhere Vigo went, citizens would greet and thank Vigo. Some citizens, who had never seen anyone from another species, even asked for a handshake from Crockta. Alaste was filled with respect for their knights. There might be an unfamiliar orc but they thought there was no harm because a knight was beside him.

Anor smiled and said, "This is a good place."

"That's right."

The streets of Alaste was filled with vigor. The back alleys didn't seem visible as they

walked through the city.

“The lord of Alaste doesn’t charge a high tax. Alaste has quality marble and big silver mines, so there is plenty of money around. It is a gift from the gods.”

As they looked around the surroundings, they eventually arrived at the lord’s residence in the center of the city. Knights were guarding it, but they knew Vigo and welcomed his return.

“Vigo!” They looked between Vigo and Crockta’s group. “Who are they? Where is Morenson?”

Vigo explained the whole story. First of all, he announced the death of his colleague who went to scout with him. The faces of the knights changed. He explained Crockta’s actions and his suggestion to have Crockta do the duel instead, causing the guards to stare strangely.

Crockta understood the look in their eyes. A competitive spirit! They wanted to directly verify if he had the skills. Crockta grinned. He didn’t hate that attitude. A knight needed such a mindset.

“Let’s go inside first. Speak to the lord.”

They opened the way.



A woman who seemed to be a staff member guided them upstairs. The lord was more frugal than he thought. The distinct architectural style of Alaste was reflected but there were no luxurious decorations.

They climbed the stairs and entered a room. The employee who guided them knocked on the door.

“Lord. Knight Vigo is here.”

“Come in.”

The voice of the lord was heard. Crockta’s group and Vigo thanked the employee before entering the room. The lord was a sturdy middle-aged man with red hair and

beard. He was talking with someone and his eyes widened as he saw the orc that appeared.

“Hmm?”

“I greet the lord.”

“Hey Vigo. Who is your orc friend standing there?”

As Vigo communicated with the lord, Crockta gazed at the man sitting with him. He was an elderly man who was going bald. The weight of the years showed on his face, but his posture was straight without any signs of weakness. He wore a sword alone with his comfortable clothes.

Crockta instinctively knew who he was. This man was the old grandmaster that Vigo had mentioned.

Once they reached a certain level, they could see many things just by looking at each other. An image was drawn. Crockta wielded his sword at the man. In a world where speed converged, the man didn't dodge but moved forward.

He narrowly avoided the greatsword and swung his sword at Crockta's abdomen. Crockta twisted his body and the two swords met. Sword, sword, a blow. Evasion and changing of offense and defense.

Their internal struggle continued for a while before a remark ended it.

“Isn't that right?”

Crockta didn't know what the question was. The white haired knight smiled. He also woke up from his fight against Crockta.

“What did you say?”

“Is Crockta Brother the Northern Conqueror Crockta?” Vigo asked again. “At first, I wasn't sure but now I am quite confident.”

Vigo also knew Crockta's identity. His reputation had spread widely.

Crockta nodded. “That is what they sometimes call me.”

“Indeed!”

The lord’s eyes grew bigger at Crockta’s reply. He exchanged looks with the knight he was sitting with. The lord rose from his seat and approached Crockta. His body was conditioned from steady training.

“Thank you for the difficult decision. Alaste will never forget the help of Northern Conqueror Crockta.”

It seemed like Vigo had spoken like Crockta already agreed to do the proxy duel. Vigo was frowning from behind the lord.

Crockta just laughed. “No. I was impressed by Vigo’s sincerity when he said that he would dedicate three months of his own salary.”

“Ohh Vigo, really?”

“Huh, yes?”

“How impressive.”

“Ah, that...”

Crockta noticed that the lord was also joking, but Vigo mumbled hesitantly.

At that moment, “Don’t make fun of the young knight.”

A hoarse voice was heard. It was a low, rough, yet resonate voice. It was an unusual tone that was attractive. The knight got up from his spot. He had a lean body and was a similar height to Crockta.

“Truly a great warrior.”

The knight reached Crockta and looked him up and down. The grandmaster’s instinct was warning him about Crockta. The orc’s solid body meant they usually fought with strength, but this orc warrior seemed more sophisticated than a human or elf. He had fast and accurate greatsword skills.

“You are stronger than me.” He admitted it.

The lord and Vigo were shocked as soon as Alaste's living legend recognized his opponent's superiority.

"To that extent?"

"Yes, it seems like he can overthrow Adandator. It is clear at first glance."

"Ohh..."

"I can now understand how you conquered the north alone."

"Ohh..."

"The gods are taking care of Alaste." He smiled and reached out to Crockta, who held his hand. "Crockta. I am an old knight of Alaste, Galadin."

"I am the orc warrior from Orcrox, Crockta."

It was the meeting of grandmaster Galadin, the guardian of Alaste, and Crockta, the conqueror of the north.

Vigo and the lord laughed heartily at the sight.

"Lord, Alaste's future is bright."

"Galadin is old and Crockta is an outsider. Alaste's future relies on young knights like you."

"Umm..."

"Is it still bright?"

"It is a little cloudy."

"That's why I'm so old."

"I'm sorry..."



The knights arranged to retrieve the corpse of the knight killed by the Mountain King. Galadin looked at the knights arranged in a polite manner. His words were short.

“Our friend has come. The funeral will be held later.”

“Yes!” The leader of the knights raised a hand to his chest and bowed. “I will start now.”

“I’ll allow it.”

“To battle!”

The knights turned around. Then they headed outside Alaste. The voices of the citizens cheering for the knights could be heard.

Tiyo watched them and asked. “You will be fighting the kingdom soon. Can you really send the knights away *dot*?”

“There is no chance of victory if we fight properly. The other side proposed the duel first so they will stick to it. They have to fear the eyes of the gods and the citizens.”

Crockta touched his chin. He pondered on something before asking Vigo.

“Vigo.”

“Yes, Brother.”

“Alaste...”

He remembered why the name Alaste was familiar. In the early days, he searched for tips on Elder Lord and saw a user advertising that Alaste was a good place to live. The person who posted the message was called Alastepara. At the time, the user had aspirations to become a senior official in Alaste and to develop it.

“Do you have anybody who is cursed by the stars?”

“We do. There are a lot of them in the city.”

“What about a person in a high position?”

“Ah, are you talking about Yellow?”

“Yellow?”

“Yes. You would’ve met her before.” Vigo pointed to a young lady. “The woman who guided us.”

“Ah, her...”

Crockta nodded. When they entered the lord’s residence, a woman had guided them. She had bangs so he hadn’t seen her forehead, but she was also a user.

Over time, as the level of users rose and strategies came into play, there were those who took an active role in different walks of life. In the past, there was the militia member Kim Dalkwang, but other users had built their own domains in Elder Lord.

“She has a quick mind and her work is good, so the lord trusts her. Why are you asking about those cursed by the stars?”

“I am asking because there are those cursed by the stars on the side of the kingdom.”

“Haha, there are those guys. The person called Rommel is famous. He is favored by the king, so you might see him at the duel.”

Rommel was the name for Choi Hansung.

The duel was in a week. The entire south knew that this was a fight between Adandator and Galadin, despite the names of the knights being concealed. They were the most famous knights on both sides.

It was also agreed that the kingdom would win. Adandator was a young and powerful supernova, while Galadin was too old. Unfortunately, the one who would duel for Alaste was Crockta, not Galadin.

It was a variable that no one expected.

“Crockta.”

Galadin’s distinctive low voice called out to him. Crockta turned his head. Galadin was dressed in a knight’s equipment, making him seem young again. Previously he looked

like an old man, but now he was a thriving warrior.

Crockta smiled and pulled out Ogre Slayer.

“Galadin.”

The two of them walked towards the knights’ training ground. Both of them wanted to test the other. Their spar would be calm and at the same time, very dangerous.

“The atmosphere around you is good but I have to see it directly. As I grow older, I become more suspicious,” Galadin said.

Crockta realized something. Due to the wrinkles on his face, Crockta hadn’t seen his true expression. Galadin wasn’t a gentlemanly knight.

“I will do it softly.”

Crockta shrugged and said, “I don’t want to hear the sound of an old man’s bones breaking.”

“Kukuku.” Galadin was an aggressive fighter. “It is good to be young!”

Before Crockta could take a stance, his strike hit Crockta’s body.

CHAPTER 149

GREAT DUEL (3)

Yellow lived in Alaste and realized that someone had visited her bedside last night. There was a letter on the desk next to her bed.

She got goosebumps as she checked the letter.

“This...”

She wondered who sent it. The author didn’t state their identity, as only a few things were mentioned. However, it contained something shocking that she had never considered at all.

“No way,” she murmured.

“Perhaps?”

But it made sense. She read the letter once again before exiting Elder Lord.



Crockta sat in front of a fireplace with Vlgo.

“I didn’t see Yellow today. Was she dragged by the call of the stars? I truly feel sorry for that friend.”

The NPCs understood the concept of disconnection as the users being summoned to the abyss. In a way, it wasn’t wrong. Going back and forth between Elder Lord and Earth. This situation often happened so users found it hard to have a close relationship with NPCs. It was hard to trust those who suddenly disappeared ahead of important things.

Therefore, users who couldn’t connect for long tended to only socialize with other users. This was because NPCs didn’t trust them.

“Yellow is normally good so this is surprising.”

Of course, Yellow was excellent in Elder Lord. She had been living like an NPC for nearly a year. This allowed her to move up to the position of working for the lord.

"I guess she has something to do." Crockta smiled strangely.

She probably ended the connection after reading the letter that Crockta sent her at night. He wasn't sure if it would work, but he needed to do what he could. The kingdom's path involved the Heaven and Earth Clan. It was already a public fact and there was a precedent where they devastated any areas in the name of the kingdom.

In particular, the southeast region with no clear system was brutally destroyed and the ruins broadcasted several times. The Heaven and Earth Clan didn't keep faith with NPCs. As long as they considered Elder Lord a game, Crockta needed to extend this duel agreement not only to NPCs but users as well.

"By the way, what are they doing?"

Vigo turned his head at Crockta's words. In the meantime, Grandmaster Galadin and Anor were staring at each other.

"Ohhh..."

Anor, who was very timid and not good with eye contact, desperately tried to turn his head away with red cheeks. It looked so funny that Tiyo joined Galadin in staring at Anor. As the eyes of the two people focused on him, Anor turned his eyes towards his hands.

"I got it. Stop! Stop!"

Galadin and Tiyo chuckled.

"You will be stronger if you don't avoid the eyes of others."

Tiyo approached, "In other words, don't act like this forever *dot*! Kahahat!"

"Ahyu." Anor seemed like he was about to cry. "It is strange when you keep staring."

"You are very shy. Don't avoid other people's eyes. It is a shame. Hahat!" Galadin was famous for identifying people's characteristics and leading them to the right path.

Crockta seemed to know the secret after exchanging blows with him. Galadin had the ability to read inner thoughts, like he was telepathic. During the spar, he predicted all of Crockta's moves. There was the feeling that he knew in advance every move Crockta was going to do and could cope with it.

Crockta won, but he wasn't sure the results would be the same if they really tried to kill each other.

"He is a mysterious person." Crockta stated.

"That is correct. A mysterious person. He looks inside people."

If he could really see into a person's heart, he would be able to find out their problems. His teachings were about inner matters, rather than technical ones.

Crockta also received advice from him.

"What did he say to Brother? If you don't mind, please let me know. I am curious. Is a warrior like you lacking anything?"

"Um..." Crockta recalled Galadin's words. "Just..."

Vigo was right.

Galadin wasn't just a person who strengthened knights. When wielding a sword, he was an aggressive knight. But after putting it away, he looked at the other person with warm eyes. He was someone who caused the other person to grow as a human.

"He told me not to shoulder everything alone."

"Oh, indeed. Brother has something." Vigo raised his thumb. "Doesn't he feel like a father when he says that?"

Crockta laughed. His father passed away but memories from his childhood still remained. He never resented his parents. In life, how many people had the strength to look straight at themselves?

"That's right."

Now it was Tiyo's turn to receive advice from Galadin. However, Tiyo disliked this and

refused his advice. An angry Galadiin wielded his sword. Tiyo ran away.

“Stop *dot*! I understand! I understand *dot*!”

“This guy! Listen to the adults!”

“I am an adult *dot*!”

“If you are an adult, listen to a real adult!”

“I am a gnome! General, General!”

“General? Shoot it once!”

“Kiyak!”

Tiyo screamed as he ran away from Galadin’s wooden sword. Crockta and Vigo burst out laughing as they saw it.

“Phew. Truly.”

The still embarrassed Anor was fanning himself as he walked towards Crockta.

“We have to watch you for you to grow. Isn’t it?”

“.....”

“.....”

“...Excuse me?”

Vigo and Crockta stared at Anor, mimicking Galadin and Tiyo from earlier.

Anor blushed. “No, now...”

They diligently gazed at Anor’s face. Anor was embarrassed and covered his face.

“Don’t do it! Ah!”

Anor’s face turned bright red as he ran somewhere else.

“Anor Brother is both handsome and cute. The females will like him.”

“Kulkulkul.”

It was enjoyable. Alaste was a vibrant city filled with laughter. Whether it was the nature of the people or the richness of the natural environment, they seemed to enjoy each moment. Of course, it wasn't just due to material reasons that laughter was gradually disappearing from the prosperous modern age compared to Elder Lord.

“Vigo. You were right.”

“What do you mean?””

“Alaste is a wonderful place.”

“Of course. I don't lie! Hahahat! Viva Alaste!”

“Kulkulkul!”

In a matter of days, Crockta had explored all over Alaste. Every time he walked through a city, Crockta felt fear towards him, whether it was because he was an orc or his frightening appearance. In fact, he wasn't a real orc but a human being wearing the shell of an orc. However, there were still negative prejudices towards his shell.

But Alaste was different. The children came to play with Crockta while merchants added orc goods. He felt like a welcomed guest.

“Brother. Now you know. Why I kept hanging onto you, despite it being the first time we met.” Vigo placed a hand on Crockta's shoulder and gazed into the distance. “The kingdom and Adandator is trying to destroy such a beautiful place.”

Once incorporated into the kingdom, this landscape would disappear. The citizens would suffer under heavy taxes and young people would be conscripted for war. The lands under the kingdom's reign were already going through this process.

Crockta nodded. “I heard that Adandator is a handsome, young man.

“Yes. His face is famous.”

“Then I'll beat him up and make him look worse than me!”

Crockta shouted. It was Crockta's declaration that he would protect Alaste with his best efforts!

But Vigo wasn't very impressed by the remark. "No matter how much you hit him, it will be difficult..."

"....."

Crockta's face stiffened. Vigo hurriedly changed his words.

"Ah, no. I believe in Brother!"

"It is okay. I'll fight in the duel..."

"What are you talking about? Brother's face is better than his. Really! I'm not lying!"



The Elder Lord community had recently heated up because of a new topic. And the one at the heart of the topic was the Heaven and Earth Clan.

[Author: Yellow Alaste]

[Title: Announcing the negotiations between those who love Alaste and the Heaven and Earth Clan.]

[Hello. I am a native of Alaste, Yellow who loves Alaste.]

The human kingdom is expanding its forces in recent years. The Alaste that I love is in crisis but most users don't know exactly what is happening. The kingdom and Alaste have decided to settle their fighting in a one-on-one duel through their respective representatives.

We can settle this without having to fight against each other.

If the kingdom wins, Alaste will be incorporated into the kingdom. If Alaste wins, it will remain independent as a neutral city and the kingdom won't invade Alaste in the future.

In fact, the possibility of us winning is low. Even though we have Grandmaster Galadin, the kingdom has the famous Adandator. However, the users who love Alaste are eager for a miracle to happen.

Anyway, the reason I am writing this is to plead with the Heaven and Earth Clan. There are users who regard NPCs as consumables, mere artificial intelligence and doesn't feel any remorse. The Heaven and Earth Clan especially has such tendencies.

So we are worried that even if Galadin and Alaste wins, the Heaven and Earth Clan will ignore the existing negotiations and hit Alaste. Users often do this, not just the Heaven and Earth Clan. People will know this. But we are users who love Alaste, and we hope that the users, including the Heaven and Earth Clan, will accept the result.

Therefore, we have asked the Heaven and Earth Clan to sign a memorandum stating that they will comply with the agreement between Alaste and the kingdom. Heaven and Earth's clan master Choi Hansung has agreed.

This is the actual memorandum.

(Screenshot)

I am posting this here because I hope that all users who enjoy Elder Lord will be the notaries of this memorandum.

We don't want Elder Lord to be ruined by a reckless war.

If there are hundreds of users, there are hundreds of ways to play. I fell in love with Alaste from the first moment I saw it. Alaste is a really beautiful place. I used to always brag about it and I am still proud.

If Alaste is defeated, I will probably disappear from this forum. I will also delete my character. There is no reason to play. If there are people who want to continue seeing it like me, please pray with us.

I hope for a miracle.

Alaste Lover, Yellow.]

Yellow posted on a famous community board. This article immediately became a hot topic.

The first reason was that the greatest knights in Elder Lord, two grandmasters were having a confrontation. Another reason was that the author was Yellow, a user who managed to become a senior official.

Yellow was the user whose name became famous with an Elder Lord strategy guide. Users who wanted to become civil servants in Elder Lord would regard her guide as a textbook. In addition, she introduced users to the calm lifestyle of Alaste and made many users turn to Alaste.

Her article became a hot topic and thousands of comments had already been posted.

The Heaven and Earth Clan also confirmed her post.



“Is it okay?”

Hyunchul, ‘Luin’ in Elder Lord said. After helping to lure and kill Lenox, he was now an executive in the Heaven and Earth Clan. In addition, using his friendship with the NPCs and Choi Hansung, Keynes went from being the clan master of Thawing Balhae to the vice clan master of Heaven and Earth.

The clan master was ‘Rommel’ but most of the clan’s actions came from Keynes’ head.

“There’s nothing to worry about.”

Rommel smiled and drank his wine. This was the clan dwelling in the capital, Esperanza. It was a land they had received directly after gaining the favor of the king. The room they were talking in was luxurious and wasn’t lacking when compared to a noble’s house. All of this was due to the members of Thawing Balhae who joined Heaven and Earth.

“Do you really think Adandator can be beaten?”

“Indeed...”

“He is a monster. I’ve talked to Adandator and he is confident that he can beat Galadin.

Galadin is old and Adandator has already reached a new level.”

“I’m glad that monster isn’t our enemy.”

“I completely agree. So don’t worry. The woman thinks it will work, but it will end without a problem.” Rommel handed the wine glass to Keynes who was sitting silently. Keynes smiled and received it. “Why aren’t you saying anything?”

“There is something that bothers me.”

Keynes’ nerves were sharp after the Maillard branch of the clan collapsed. All of Maillard’s members mentioned the NPC called Crockta. Everyone knew that the Thawing Balhae had been destroyed by the Righteous Orc. A coincidence? Or maybe he was chasing after them in the Heaven and Earth Clan.

“Don’t worry about it. You are here now.”

“Yes.”

Keynes nodded. Even so, he couldn’t help being worried. Rommel laughed.

“Keynes, you are always worrying.”

Luin suddenly said, “Speaking of worrying, what will happen if Adandator is beaten?”

“Um... well, it can’t be helped. I actually thought about ignoring it but then that girl made the post.”

“Yellow’s head is quite good.”

“It’s a last hurrah. Anyway, Adandator will win. Now, drink.”

Rommel, Luin, Keynes, and the other high ranking members of the Heaven and Earth Clan nodded. They raised their cups at the same time and shouted, “Heaven and Earth!”

“War!”



A few days later on a sunny day, both the Lord of Alaste and the King of the Kingdom led their knights out on the Gabriel Plains located not too far from Alaste.

It was for the great duel.

CHAPTER 150

EVIL EMPIRE

The two sides confronted each other on the plains. The kingdom's and Alaste's flags danced in the wind. The king and the lord of Alaste headed towards each other on horseback.

"It is great to see you."

"It has been a while, Earl Alaste."

The king was a young man, the epitome of a noble with blonde hair and observant, blue eyes. Of course, he was more than a mere noble. He was the king who would soon stand at the top.

"It's a good day. I will cleanly accept the result today. In the name of the gods."

"Yes. I will as well. I hope Your Highness keeps the words you said beforehand."

The king's eyes narrowed. Earl Alaste's expression didn't change.

The king asked, "You seem to have confidence. How is Galadin?"

"He's as upright as always. Do you want to see him?"

"It's okay. It is enough to see you instead of that old man's face."

Both of them didn't avoid the other's eyes.

"...Okay."

The king's lips twisted before he smiled and said, "Once the sun comes up to the middle, the duel will start. I'll tell Adandator to control his strength in consideration for Galadin's old age."

"Thank you for your words. Just..."

"Just?"

“Galadin won’t be fighting today.”

“What?” The king gazed at the lord with a suspicious expression. “Then who will come out?”

“You will see when the sun rises to the middle.”

“.....”

The king’s face twisted at the lord’s relaxed attitude. He was dissatisfied with the lord’s relaxed attitude and confused about the unknown warrior. He spat out in a rough voice, “Yes, I’ll see soon.”

They turned around and returned to their camps. Lord Alaste immediately sought out Crockta who was in a tent at the rear of the camp. His face was stiff with tension. However, he couldn’t help smiling at the sight within the tent.

Crockta was lying on a bed and humming, while Vigo was sitting next to the bed and fanning Crockta.

“Are you cool?”

“Harder.”

“Hiyah!”

“Do it properly. You will be responsible if my condition isn’t good.”

“No! Brother!”

“A knight should have a better wrist snap.”

He didn’t seem like a warrior who had the fate of the city on his shoulders. That made him seem more reliable. This was none other than Northern Conqueror Crockta. He would clearly be able to cope with Adandator.

Even Galadin acknowledged that Crockta was stronger than him. The lord decided to give up worrying. It had already left his hands. He had dealt the best hand he could.

“Vigo.”

“Yes, Lord!”

“Fan him properly. The future of Alaste hangs on your fan.”

“Cough! Yes!”

Tiyo and Anor came together and weren’t worried at all. They were dozing in a corner of the tent. They had drunk alcohol all night. They were friends who had no tension at all.

“Crockta, I want to thank you once again. Thank you for your willingness to go to such a dangerous place.”

“Kulkukul. There is no need for thanks, I am just doing the work of a warrior.” Crockta leisurely stretched while enjoying the breeze from the fan. “So when is the duel?”

“Noon.”

Crockta looked at the sky through the open gap in the tent. It was pretty soon.



Trumpets sounded. Both sides were nervous. The sun had risen above their heads. Now the duel would begin. It was a fight to determine the future of each side. So many things were involved.

Adandator appeared first. The king placed a hand on his shoulder and spoke to him. Adandator answered in a short manner.

“It is lively.”

Adandator was a beautiful young man. His body was well balanced. He was still young, but he was a seasoned knight who had gone through many battles.

Then it was time for Alaste’s representative to come out. Crockta walked forward.

“.....!”

The kingdom’s side was shaken and murmurs gradually spread. They all expected the warrior for Alaste to be Galadin. It was common knowledge that the best knight in

Alaste was Galadin, and there was no stronger knight. The kingdom was convinced of their victory because Galadin was too old compared to Adandator.

However, a surprising figure appeared.

An orc. A warrior with a heinous face and tattoos all over his body. His enormous mass and greatsword could be seen clearly from afar.

Adandator looked at him curiously. It wasn't a tense face. He thought it would be a tragic comedy.

"I am Adandator Paklinche. Who are you?" He was curious about the orc standing in front of him. "Are you really the representative of Alaste?"

Crockta nodded. The plains gradually became quiet.

Crockta smiled and looked at Adandator. "My name is Crockta. I came from Orcrox and stand here to guard Alaste."

".....!"

Adandator's eyes widened.

Crockta. He knew that name. It was the unidentified orc who killed the great chieftain and blocked them before the call for the northern war began in earnest. On that day, all the gods whispered to his name.

"Alaste has prepared a hidden card."

His expression recovered and he lifted his sword. Adandator didn't use a greatsword like Crockta. It was a thin and long sword that looked elegant. Both of them used Paklinche's swordsmanship, but they had different attitudes and atmosphere.

Crockta asked, "Do you know Leyteno Paklinche?"

"Hoh?" Adandator laughed. "The traitor Leyteno. Orcs should know him. Yes, I know Leyteno. He is a coward on the side of the orcs. The traitor who turned his sword against us. That is why he is a blot to the rest of the Paklinche family. In the end, he died miserably."

“A coward. A traitor. A blot.” Crockta laughed out loud.

The Leyteno that Crockta heard about was absolutely not a coward. He wasn't a traitor or a blot, but a shining star. The hero who followed the path of his sword. Everyone would've blamed him. If Leyteno just closed his eyes and aimed his sword at the orcs, he could gain wealth and honor.

However, he gritted his teeth and did what he believed was right. He wasn't a slave but his own master. If he followed the same direction that all the other fingers were pointing, he was just a slave.

However, Leyteno shook his head and pointed to the other side alone. He straightened up, pointed to his own beliefs and moved. That was why he would stand forever in the Hall of Fame. Leyteno Paklinche would never die. None of the warriors in the Hall of Fame would die.

“Right now, I will connect to Leyteno Paklinche's will.”

Crockta raised his greatsword. As Crockta reached a higher ground, he had gone beyond Leyteno's swordsmanship but it was still alive in Ogre Slayer.

“Feel it yourself. Paklinche.”

“Show me your blade, Orc.” Adandator grinned. “You are ignorant. I can see an echo of the traitor. Okay, just once...”

At this moment, everyone on the plains was watching Crockta and Adandator.

“Let's do it!”

Adandator plunged in first. Crockta watched him. The world slowed. Adandator's handsome face was shining with a mixture of arrogance and self-confidence. Crockta's greatsword swung towards his shining face.

Kaaaang!

Adandator was a genius and was waiting for Crockta in the realm of the Pinnacle. The two blades met several times. It was a battle that ordinary eyes couldn't follow. They exchanged blows for a long time. As explosive sounds were heard from both sounds, small wounds appeared on their bodies.

Blood splattered on both their faces.

There would be cheers from both sides whenever dust rose as a result of the collision between swords. It was a fight of absolute power that could rarely be seen!

At that moment, Crockta's battle cry shook the plains.

"Bul'tarrrrrrrrrrr————!"

It was like an earthquake occurred as the audience member's legs shook from the roar. Adandator, who faced it directly, felt like his heart was going to stop. Crockta's overwhelming presence was pouring toward him. As his eyes flicked, the trajectory of the greatsword flying towards him changed in a subtle way.

Adandator tried to block it but was thrown back by a huge power.

"Kuheeok!"

The moment of the attack, Crockta's fist struck Adandator's abdomen. Adandator flew through the air and landed on the ground. Crockta's powerful blow!

Waaaaaaaaaaaaah!

Alaste's side cheered. On the other hand, the side of the kingdom became completely quiet.

"....."

Adandator stood up. He shuddered from the impact as blood poured from his nose.

Crockta laughed and raised his finger, signalling his opponent to quickly come at him.

"Kulkul, are you okay?"

"You aren't a mere child. I understand..."

Adandator laughed. He spat out the blood in his mouth. Then he took a serious posture with his sword. His body started to enter the Pinnacle. Over and over, he once again reached a high ground. The world was still.

He jumped and brandished his sword at Crockta. Crockta blocked it with Ogre Slayer.

However, his skin was torn and blood poured out. Crockta hurriedly stepped back.

“.....!”

This time, it was the kingdom’s side that cheered. Adandator smiled and repeated Crockta’s words, “Are you okay?”

Crockta responded with a smile, “You also aren’t a mere child.”

“Kilkilkil.”

Crockta calmly raised Ogre Slayer.

Adandator was a genius. He could believe that. Adandator had surpassed the realm of the Pinnacle. It was the realm of the Hero that Crockta had learned while crossing life and death. If so, Crockta should do the same thing.

The cheers and boos became mixed together. The sun was shining above their heads. Sweat was pouring down their cheeks as they recognized the weight of the weapons they held.

A formidable opponent. A high level of swordsmanship where anyone could win was implemented. An interesting opponent.

They moved their bodies while thinking the same thing. The strands of causality started to converge on both of them. The strands of causality stretched out like tentacles towards each other. One step, one stroke, a stepping motion, every time the blades moved, they aimed to create a life or death injury.

Indeed, Paklinche’s blood was very deep.

“I never thought you would follow this far...”

Adandator was inwardly impatient. He was convinced that he could win without fail if Galadin was his opponent. But then this orc appeared instead of Galadin. His instincts sent a warning. They were both on the same ground. This orc had also surpassed the Pinnacle.

Maybe he would die today. The chains of causality stretching from Crockta sought to swallow Adandator.

The sun was blazing above his head. It was hot. Adandator's eyes were dazzled. If he was careless, the orc would cause him to die under this sun.

In the infinitely slow world, Crockta and Adandator met each other. Sweat trickled down Adandator's face. But he never looked away. Now the plains were still. They felt that the fight had reached a realm that they didn't dare to evaluate.

The first one to move was Adandator. He exploded his power in order to win the battle before it lengthened even further. Pressure rose from his body. His power reversed causation and rushed towards Crockta's death.

It was like a tsunami was heading towards Crockta. Numerous blades were aiming at his neck. Causality sped towards Crockta's death. Crockta aimed for Adandator's death and canceled out the attack.

Blood poured from wounds on his limbs. The blades from Adandator inevitably fell towards Crockta from all angles. They pierced his shoulders, sides, and thighs at the same time.

"Ugh!" Crockta fell down.

"Waaaaaaack!" Adandator didn't miss this gap and rushed forward. He wanted to finish this in one blow.

A huge wave pushed towards Crockta. Death seemed unstoppable. The handful of wind, bubbles, nail-sized mass and every other trivial thing could cause death. Compared to that, the tool called a sword, which was made to kill others, was like a large army advancing towards death.

Dozens then hundreds of swords poured towards Crockta. The probability of survival and probability of death were reversed. Life itself led to death. However.

"Bul'tar."

Crockta whispered. As Adandator's tsunami of death flew towards him, he started weaving together the causation of the world. It was risky.

This was the first time Crockta thought about death since the battle against the great chieftain. He needed to risk everything to overcome Adandator's blow. Crockta held Ogre Slayer. He would fight back with his life on the line.

However, at that moment...

Crockta suddenly saw something.

‘I am alive.’

He didn’t know what it was. However, Crockta instinctively leaned towards the line that was passing through the world. It was a color that was hard to describe. It was a color that didn’t exist in the world.

That line penetrated both the visible world that people could see, the world of the Pinnacle and the world of the Hero that reversed causality. Even death couldn’t bear it.

‘Honor.’

What was that line? In addition, the color as well. Why was it so radiant? The moment that his body touched that line. The whole world pushed Crockta’s back. It was a helping hand to raise all the sinking things.

Crockta rushed towards the infinitely unfolding tsunami of death. He flew towards the infinite expanse of the abyss.

Bul’tarrrrrrrrrrr—————!

There was light.



It was a long fight. Crockta and Adandator gradually entered a state of fighting that couldn’t be understood. Only a few senior ranking knights could feel the level. The two repeated the gains and losses as they kept attacking each other. Blood sporadically splattered but they didn’t back down.

The king stared blankly and inadvertently dropped his wine glass. However, the king and his knights were conscious of the pieces of glass. It might be a fight that they could never see again in their lives.

“I can’t believe it...”

At that moment, Adandator rushed like crazy. It was an attack on everything. As if a storm was taking place around his body, countless attacks were launched. Crockta blocked with his greatsword but fell down to one knee.

Adandator didn't miss this and chased him. Everyone sensed that it was the final blow. There was a black wave.

In that instance, the kingdom was convinced that Adandator had won. It was a blow containing everything. No one could survive that hit.

Then...

A bolt of light. It was a very short moment. Light enveloped the plains. It was a color that had never been seen before. They didn't know what color it was. It destroyed Adandator's black wave.

".....!"

The light disappeared and dust rose up. They could only see that Adandator's sword was broken and Crockta's Ogre Slayer was pointed at his neck. Silence fell over the plains. The winner and loser didn't move. There was silence. The clouds moving through the sky stopped.

Then a gnome standing on Alaste's side broke the silence.

"Kahahahat! Victory *dot*!"

There was no tension in the voice. Then Alaste's side understood the situation and started cheering. They threw their weapons and helmets and yelled. Everyone embraced each other as they shouted.

"Waaaaaaaah!"

"We won!"

"Hooray Alaste! Alaste!"

"Hooray Crockta!"

"Alaste! Alaste!"

The kingdom's side was silent. The faces of the young king, his knights and the Heaven and Earth executives stiffened. They hadn't expected Adandator to be defeated. However, the orc Crockta had ruined their ambitions.

"Dammit, that person... I knew it."

The former master of Thawing Balhae and current vice master of Heaven and Earth, Keynes muttered. That Crockta kept continuing to disturb him. The guy who got rid of Thawing Balhae. Now he was chasing the Heaven and Earth Clan and hindering their work. He gritted his teeth. Somehow, he had to get rid of that orc.

Rommel kept silent with a stiff face.

Adandator dropped his weapon and declared his surrender, causing the duel to completely end.

The lord of Alaste approached the king. Now that victory had been decided, the Alaste lord descended from his horse and bowed towards the king in a polite manner.

"Please accept the result. Your Highness."

"....."

Instead of answering, the king quietly turned his head away. The lord of Alaste smiled and stepped back. He felt very uncomfortable. But it didn't matter now. It was time to go back to Alaste and celebrate.



Alaste scheduled a city wide festival. The protagonist was Crockta.

Everyone praised him as the hero who saved Alaste. Crockta's group traveled through the streets and shared food and alcohol with the citizens. To the children, he wasn't an orc but an orc knight. The children gathered every time he appeared. They were all calling Crockta's name.

There was a proposal to build a statue of Crockta in commemoration of today. All the sculptors in Alaste volunteered. Crockta shook his head but was forced to accept their will. His appearance, made of marble, was to remain in Alaste forever.

There were women confessing to Anor. Anor didn't avoid them, staring straight into their eyes as he politely refused. They smiled and expressed their thanks for Anor's gentlemanly attitude. Tiyo hit Anor's ass.

Yellow appeared and hugged Crockta before giving him a kiss on the cheek. Crockta couldn't stop her actions. She loved Alaste and praised Crockta, stating that she would be his fan in the future. People were surprised since this was the first time they saw her drunkenness.

Tiyo eventually accepted Galadin's advice. Crockta didn't know the specifics, but Galadin laughed heartily while Tiyo remained patient. His expression was rotten but his attitude was so polite that Crockta and Anor ridiculed him. Tiyo closed his eyes and endured it.

Crockta's group enjoyed the atmosphere but eventually had to leave Alaste. As Alaste's heroes, Alaste promised that they would always receive a warm welcome. All the citizens blessed their way as Crockta's group left the gate.

Crockta's group was heading towards the resort city Gridori.

After Crockta's group left, the kingdom broke their agreement and invaded Alaste. Alaste was devastated. The kingdom became an empire, and the king became an emperor.



PDF by: traitor#ZEN